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PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997*

MAJOR PROGRAMME VI. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Programme 33. Regional co-operation for development in Latin America and the Caribbean

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* The present document contains programme 33 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. The complete medium-term plan will subsequently be issued in final printed form as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/45/6/Rev.1).

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PROGRAMME 33. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

A. Programme

1. General orientation

33.1 The general mandate for the present programme derives from Article 1, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Charter of the United Nations; Economic and Social Council resolution 106 (VI); and from the Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

33.2 The overall orientation of the programme focuses on the achievement of sustained economic growth with equity of the Latin American and Caribbean region in order to ensure the social cohesion and political stability which is the foundation for all development.

33.3 The objectives of the programme are based on a prospective analysis of the projected situation in the countries of the region in the 1990s. The analysis begins with a brief examination of the status of the region's economies at the end of a decade marked by major setbacks in Latin America and the Caribbean, which, as the 1980s drew to a close, were characterized by a serious slowdown in their economic growth, sharp external and internal macro-economic imbalances and a severe deterioration in the living conditions of vast segments of the population.

33.4 Within this context, the main development challenges that will be facing Latin America and the Caribbean in the coming decade appear to be the following: expansion or resumption of economic growth based on a redoubled domestic savings effort; implementation of policies to ensure an efficient use and allocation of new investments; transformation of the region's production structures, together with the achievement of higher levels of productivity; progress towards greater equity and social cohesion, which must include a marked reduction in extreme poverty within the region; control of inflation, which would remove one of the main obstacles to the formulation and systematic application of policies designed to promote sustained and equitable economic development; achievement of a reasonable degree of external balance and the mitigation of the problems caused by the servicing of the external debt through the diversification of exports and efficient import substitution; the region's adaptation to new and changing circumstances in the international situation; full utilization of the potential represented by intraregional co-operation; and consolidation and improvement of democratic processes with a view to promoting stronger pluralistic and participatory societies which will foster an effective form of interaction between social and economic agents.

33.5 In order to meet these challenges, the countries' domestic economic and social policies will have to fulfil at least three basic requirements: adjustment, efficiency and equity. If these three conditions are to be met simultaneously, the public sector will have to be reformed and rationalized, both as regards the activities and functions of the central Government and in respect of the performance and the role played by public enterprises.

2. Overall strategy

33.6 The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the organizational unit responsible for the elaboration and implementation of this programme, was created on 25 February 1948. Its terms of reference were established by Economic and Social Council resolution 106 (VI) and were amended at its ninth, thirteenth, twenty-eighth and forty-seventh sessions and at its second regular sessions of 1979 and 1984.

33.7 In the framework of the overall orientation and objectives, the present programme provides for the servicing of sessions of ECLAC policy-making organs and their subsidiary committees, and regional intergovernmental conferences; support to Member States for negotiations in international forums; as well as activities in four main areas: technical co-operation, sectoral and multidisciplinary applied research, training, and the dissemination of information through the production of technical documentation and specialized periodicals.

33.8 In addition, the programme contemplates advisory assistance activities, the implementation of which calls for the formulation and execution of operational projects. It also provides for activities designed to support the organization and strengthening of entrepreneurial associations and to assist small and medium-scale industrial, agricultural and agro-industrial enterprises on the basis of horizontal co-operation and institutional technical assistance mechanisms.

33.9 It is anticipated that some of the above activities will require voluntary contributions and other extrabudgetary resources.

33.10 In implementing the programme, ECLAC will continue to maintain appropriate liaison and co-operation with the other United Nations regional commissions and with the pertinent substantive organs, departments or divisions of the United Nations Secretariat, including the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It will also co-ordinate its activities with the relevant specialized agencies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In order to avoid duplication of efforts, ECLAC has established several joint programmes and units of long standing, namely: the Joint ECLAC/FAO Agriculture Division; the Joint ECLAC/UNIDO Industry and Technology Division; the Joint ECLAC/CTC Unit on Transnational Corporations; the Joint ECLAC/UNEP Development and Environment Unit; and the Joint ECLAC/UNCHS Unit on Human Settlements. Close co-ordination will also be maintained with the institutions concerned with the economic integration of the region and with the subregional and regional organizations working in fields related to this programme.

3. Subprogramme structure and priorities

33.11 The present programme consists of the following subprogrammes:

1. Food and agriculture
2. Economic development
3. Economic and social planning
4. Industrial, scientific and technological development
5. International trade and development finance
6. Natural resources and energy
7. Environment and human settlements
8. Population
9. Social development
10. Statistics and economic projections
11. Transport
12. Subregional activities in Mexico and Central America
13. Subregional activities in the Caribbean

33.12 The programme proposes new subprogrammes 12 and 13, which cover the activities conducted by the subregional headquarters in Mexico and in the Caribbean in keeping with the importance attached by the Member States to the activities of the Commission in these subregions.

33.13 Subprogramme 2 (Economic development) is designated highest priority.

B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

(a) Objectives

33.14 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolution 458 (XX), paragraph 3; the Declaration of Recife adopted by the Twentieth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, paragraphs 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 15.

33.15 The negative repercussions and effects of the crisis and the adjustment process associated with the external debt have severely affected those who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Since 1982, regional agricultural production has grown only slightly, and has not kept up with the growth of the population. Farmers have had to face a depressed demand for agricultural products and higher non-wage production costs; the two factors together have caused instability and in many cases a deterioration in agricultural profitability.

33.16 Programmes designed to promote agricultural growth and combat rural poverty, nutritional deficiency and rapid environmental degradation in the ecologically fragile rain forest areas have been severely affected by cuts in government

funding. Also affected have been public agricultural institutions, whose operation has been jeopardized owing to budgetary cuts, which have been quite severe in many cases.

33.17 The objectives of the subprogramme are the following:

(a) To support the countries of the region in directing their economic and social policies towards a better balance between rural and urban areas and in adopting, by many of them, a concept of rural development understood not only as agricultural progress but as progress in the other forms of economic and social activity, including infrastructure, industries and commerce in the urban areas which provide services to the rural populations;

(b) To assist Governments of the region in giving preferential treatment to small-scale farmers and peasants with respect to growth, technology transfer, incentive and investment policies and access to land and water. With regard to modern agriculture, which has already acquired considerable capacity to achieve sustained expansion, policy measures will be proposed to encourage the further development of their productive capacity, thereby lessening the uncertainty of the economic environment (for instance as regards exchange rates) and other limitations on the efficiency of policies which provide incentives to production, productivity and exports;

(c) To co-operate with the Governments of the region in increasing their export earnings, which in view of the current external debt circumstances has become a critical imperative. Priority attention will be given to the export of agricultural products, in which the countries can be competitive in the long run. Support will be provided for specific measures aimed at the replacement of extra-regional imports by a greater volume of intra-regional agricultural trade;

(d) To support national initiatives in order to make greater use of existing technological innovations and to democratize productive modernization processes, making those available to small-scale farmers and peasants and helping them to raise their productivity.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.18 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under the subprogramme:

(a) Investigation and analysis of economic and social topics concerning food, agriculture and rural development of regional scope and importance, based on case studies;

(b) Technical support to Governments in their concrete agricultural and rural development efforts, including direct contributions to the formulation and application of agricultural and rural development policies, programmes and projects;

(c) Co-operation with the secretariats of the subregional and regional co-operation and integration schemes and agreements, in matters of mutual concern involving activities relating to food and agriculture.

SUBPROGRAMME 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

33.19 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 437 (XIX), 458 (XX), 477 and 478 (XXI).

33.20 Owing to the debt crisis and structural factors, the 1980s have been a very difficult decade for the States Members of the region. The challenge of the 1990s will be to reinitiate development with equity, while at the same time overcoming the many structural obstacles of the past and the severe macro-economic imbalances resulting from this crisis.

33.21 Since both restrictions limit the range of possible options, the policy-makers will need timely, complete and systematic information about national, regional and international trends, in order to anticipate turning points, deal with new problems and take advantage of opportunities that may arise, and thus to procure the design and execution of appropriate policies.

33.22 At the same time, as a result of the crisis, the difficulty of generating foreign exchange and effectively channelling savings into reproductive investments, together with financial weakness, have become key obstacles to development. In this situation, it is of paramount importance to strengthen and develop a broad export base and make an extensive and sound series of investments to ensure the modernization and corresponding change of the productive structures.

33.23 The activities under the subprogramme will concentrate on the following objectives:

(a) To ascertain annually the overall economic trends in the region and the economic policies and events in all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, on the basis of a common statistical and analytical framework;

(b) To provide comparative analyses of the prevailing development strategies in order to assess their effectiveness in overcoming the debt burden and macro-economic imbalances.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.24 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under this subprogramme:

(a) Gather information and publish reports on trends in the economies of the region; provide annual previews of trends in the economies and a preliminary overview of the situation of each country based on the first nine months of the year, in December of each year;

(b) Conduct cyclical studies of the decisive links between short-run equilibria and medium- and long-term development goals and of public policies for harmonizing macro-economic stability, equity and structural change;

(c) Provide, upon request, technical assistance in the design and execution of economic policies;

(d) Organize seminars and meetings of ad hoc experts to consider the conclusions of the cyclical studies.

SUBPROGRAMME 3. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLANNING

(a) Objectives

33.25 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from resolution 220 (AC.52) of the ninth session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC, which established the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES).

33.26 Because of the serious structural problems of the region that have been aggravated by the current crisis, the planning and co-ordination of public policies must be strengthened in order to achieve higher levels of development. There is need, in particular, to establish the technical bases for the process of social concertation of medium- and long-term development policies.

33.27 The present subprogramme will have the following objectives:

(a) To develop methods and techniques to improve the process of formulating economic and social development strategies;

(b) To assist in strengthening the systems and processes for the planning and co-ordination of public policies;

(c) To promote the exchange of experiences and mutual co-operation among the planning agencies of the region;

(d) To disseminate planning methods and techniques.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.28 The course of action for the subprogramme will be:

(a) Research and analysis of methods and techniques to improve the process of formulation of economic and social development strategies, including the publication and dissemination of the corresponding technical documents;

(b) Organization of meetings, seminars and workshops to share experiences and to promote contacts and co-operation among the planning agencies of the region;

(c) Providing support to Member States of the region through technical assistance missions and through training courses on planning and public policies.

SUBPROGRAMME 4. INDUSTRIAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

33.29 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 34/218, 42/193 and 43/182; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 357 (XVI), 386 (XVIII), 389 (XVIII) and 498 (XXII).

33.30 The process of industrialization undertaken by the countries of the region, despite obvious national differences, shares a number of important features of which note should be taken, namely:

- (a) Low international competitiveness of industrial production;
- (b) Insufficient linkages with the sectors of natural resources;
- (c) Insufficient capacity for absorption and technological innovation in Latin American industrial enterprises.

33.31 Consequently, Member States need support in designing institutional strategies, policies and modifications aimed at overcoming those serious deficiencies.

33.32 The objectives of the subprogramme, therefore, are:

- (a) To collaborate with the Governments of the region in the development of institutions and in the adoption of measures aimed at enhancing the international competitiveness of local industrial production;
- (b) To promote increasing linkages between the industrial sector, on the one hand, and the sectors of natural resources and educational and science and technology intensive services, on the other;
- (c) To promote the training of specialized personnel in the area of the design of industrial, scientific and technological strategies and policies;
- (d) To support national initiatives aimed at the technological strengthening of industrial activities, particularly those undertaken by small- and medium-sized enterprises, in order to have greater flexibility in taking advantage of new international market opportunities;
- (e) To promote the various modalities of collaboration and co-ordination between Governments and the industrial sectors.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.33 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under the subprogramme:

- (a) Research and analysis of the performance of the industrial sector in Latin America and its relations with the sectors of natural resources, with emphasis on the formulation and evaluation of industrial, scientific and technological policies and their impact on international competitiveness and on the incorporation of technological progress;
- (b) Follow-up on the evolution of international trends and on the experiences of countries outside the region in transforming their productive structures that would be useful for the elaboration of strategies and policies, with emphasis on case studies in the Scandinavian, Mediterranean and Asian countries;
- (c) Undertaking of sectoral studies at the international level in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO),

aimed at identifying opportunities for international specialization for the entrepreneurial sector in Latin America;

(d) Provision of technical assistance at the national and sectoral levels, as well as co-operation with subregional and regional integration agencies, in the area of industrial and technological policies and strategies;

(e) Development of training mechanisms for the benefit of senior public and private sector policy makers in industry, taking advantage of the documentation that will result from the implementation of the activities described above;

(f) Dissemination of information on industrial, scientific and technological development through a periodic bulletin.

SUBPROGRAMME 5. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

(a) Objectives

33.34 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 368 (XVII), 375 (XVII), 385 (XVIII), 386 (XVIII), 430 (XIX), 438 (XIX), 439 (XIX), 458 (XX), 476 (XXI), 486 (XXI) and 497 (XXII) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development resolution 159 (VI).

33.35 The consequences of the heavy burden of external debt servicing and the shortage of new external capital have had numerous restrictions on economic and social development of the countries of the region. In particular, development financing - both external and internal - has been severely affected by the events in the world economy since 1982. Sources of external public and private financing have suffered a severe contraction. The condition of foreign lenders is not likely to change in the near future. However, the region is confronted by the urgent need to make structural changes in order to maintain sustained economic growth rates.

33.36 That situation has coincided with serious problems that affect Latin America's position in the world economy, especially owing to the trade protectionism of the industrialized countries, the deterioration of commodity prices and the growing impact of services on international trade; and it has prevented the expansion of Latin American and Caribbean foreign trade, which would have allowed for a gradual reduction in the debt/export ratio. Special attention needs to be given to the future development of the situation, and the need to agree on Latin American positions in the various world negotiating forums with respect to these matters.

33.37 Moreover, if Latin America and the Caribbean were in a better economic and political position, the process of regional integration and co-operation could be accelerated.

33.38 The subprogramme will have the following objectives:

(a) In the area of international trade:

(i) To support Member States in designing policies and measures to expand trade flows - of traditional products and manufactures, services and new products - to gain effective access to markets outside the region beyond

tariffs and protectionist restrictions and, in this context, to attenuate or overcome the current vulnerability of relations with developed countries;

- (ii) To provide Member States with analytical information and policy recommendations on options to diversify Latin America's trade and financial relations, with special reference to the developing countries and those with centrally planned economies;
 - (iii) To provide support to Member States in formulating positions to be taken by the region as a whole in the various multilateral negotiation forums in which they participate;
 - (iv) To promote the full use of the multilateral or bilateral co-operation machinery contained in the regional integration and co-operation schemes, with a view to recovering and reactivating intra-regional trade;
- (b) In the area of development finance:
- (i) To help Member States formulate international and regional strategies to solve the problems stemming from external indebtedness, with an emphasis on improving the terms and conditions of this indebtedness;
 - (ii) To support the elaboration and design of policies aimed at strengthening the capacity to generate domestic financial resources for development, and the efficient channelling of these resources into investment by the national financial systems;
 - (iii) To provide advisory assistance to the countries with respect to financial integration, helping them especially to develop institutions to facilitate the allocation of available investment resources in the region.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.39 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under the subprogramme:

- (a) In the area of international trade:
 - (i) Publication of technical studies on changes in the world trade system with respect to structural adjustment in the developed countries and relations between the region and the rest of the world, paying particular attention to prospects for exporting commodities, manufactures and services;
 - (ii) Analytical studies on the opportunities for greater geographical diversification in trade relations, and possibilities for gradually reducing or eliminating all types of obstacles to the development of the region's trade flows;
 - (iii) Technical assistance in reviewing the main policies and practices of international trade negotiations with respect to protectionism and the impact of technological progress, and the role of services in the

development process. Similar activities will be carried out in the fields of regional integration and co-operation and South-South co-operation;

(b) In the area of development finance:

- (i) Carrying out and dissemination of case studies on domestic savings, particularly institutional savings, and on the efficiency of national financial systems, especially concerning the problem of monitoring and regulating the commercial banking system;
- (ii) Preparation of proposals designed to improve the terms and conditions of the external indebtedness of the countries of the region, and advisory assistance, through technical assistance missions to the countries of the region that request such assistance, and through regional and international technical seminars on the subject;
- (iii) Prospective analysis of regional financial co-operation to support economic integration and alleviate the countries' need for external resources.

SUBPROGRAMME 6. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY

(a) Objectives

33.40 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from the following:

(a) In the area of mineral resources: General Assembly resolutions 32/176 and 33/194; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1979/71, 1979/72, 1985/48 and 1985/50; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 379 (XVII) and 388 (XVIII);

(b) In the area of water resources: General Assembly resolutions 32/158, 35/18 and 40/171; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1979/70, 1981/80, 1981/81, 1983/57, 1984/73, 1985/49 and 1985/167; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 409 (XVIII), 411 (XVIII), 442 (XIX), 443 (XIX), 461 (XX) and 484 (XXI);

(c) In the area of marine resources: General Assembly resolutions 37/66, 38/59 A, 39/73, 40/63, 41/34, 42/20 and 43/18; Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/48; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 387 (XVIII) and 396 (XVIII);

(d) In the area of energy: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 388 (XVIII), 408 (XVIII), 413 (XVIII) and 426 (XIX).

33.41 The current development strategy for the mining resources of Latin America is based on the exploitation of the eight metallic minerals in highest demand on the international market. The changes that are occurring in the consumption and production structures of the developed countries are resulting in a fall in the volume and price levels of these products, which in principle will lead to a reorientation of their destination.

33.42 One of the new markets that might absorb the surplus output is the Latin American market itself, considered as a whole and not as a series of national markets. The dynamic bases of the regional market may be found in both the expansion of per capita consumption - industrial utilization - and in the import substitution of mining and metallurgical products, together with manufactures using mining inputs, which in total represent approximately 40 per cent of imports from outside the region.

33.43 The growing demand for water resources and the traditionally high rate of investment in water management infrastructures mean that there is an urgent need in the region to improve the efficiency of the use of these resources and infrastructures and the management of high mountain water basins, without neglecting environmental protection. This requires support, both nationally and regionally, for specific training activities in water resource management, together with other measures such as the wide dissemination of information on technological advances in water management; and substantive support of efforts to assess the social and economic implications of the use and management of water and river basins.

33.44 The legislative and institutional aspects of marine resources have been less well developed in the region than other fields of economic activity. This situation has often resulted in fragmentary approaches, which have made it difficult to carry out any proper assessment of the management of these resources. It is therefore essential to have a reference system for legal or institutional consultations.

33.45 The countries of the region need to have background and timely and reliable information in order to formulate plans for the energy sector. They also need access to methodological and analytical instruments for their market evaluation and prospective studies. However, because of the shortage of resources, many national bodies in the region concerned with planning this sector need advisory assistance and substantive support in these matters.

33.46 The objectives of the subprogramme are as follows:

(a) In the area of mineral resources: to assist the Governments of the region in implementing the new development strategy for mining resources; to promote systems to facilitate the intra-regional trade of mining products and machinery and inputs for this sector; to promote activities which contribute to the vertical integration of mining, metallurgical and industrial production and the diversification of production and export structures;

(b) In the area of water resources: to support the Governments of the Member States in formulating policies and strategies for the full and integral development and use of water resources, through better co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations and other organizations in the framework of the Mar del Plata Action Plan; to promote and support an intra-regional training network for officials in charge of managing water resources, so that the plan will be fully operative by 1995; to promote intergovernmental co-operation for better management of water resources, especially in less developed and relatively poor regions and in the high mountain water basins;

(c) In the area of marine resources: to support Governments in implementing international and national instruments designed to strengthen the development of marine resources; to provide technical support to the groups of Latin American countries (GRULAS) in the various world negotiating forums; to promote co-operation among developing countries for activities of mutual benefit;

(d) In the area of energy: to advise Member States of the region in the design and application of energy plans and policies; to support them in prospective studies of the energy sector.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.47 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities:

(a) In the area of mineral resources: preparation of studies identifying lacunae in the mining and industrial production structure; support for the establishment of a Latin American geological and mining research service and a small- and medium-scale mining enterprise system; promotion of South-South agreements and production of new mineral-based compounds; organization of meetings in the context of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and the Latin American Mining Organization (OLAMI) to spread integrated technologies applicable especially to medium- and small-scale enterprises;

(b) In the area of water resources: publication of periodical reports on trends in the use of water resources and areas related to the monitoring of the Mar del Plata Action Plan, with particular attention to drinking water supply and sanitation; promotion of horizontal co-operation activities between the institutions belonging to the network for the development and management of high mountain water basins, through the preparation of manuals and training materials; and technical assistance to Member States through training courses and advisory assistance missions;

(c) In the area of marine resources: preparation of technical documents and reports for the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific and for intergovernmental bodies or mechanisms in other subregions; organization of seminars and ad hoc groups of experts to explore research topics relating to the development of ocean potential; and promotion of technical co-operation opportunities with extrabudgetary funding, mainly from donor countries with extensive experience in the matter;

(d) In the area of energy: research and preparation of studies on the interrelationships among energy, economic growth and development and the environment; dissemination of these studies and reports; and gathering and publication of statistics on the energy sector.

SUBPROGRAMME 7. ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

(a) Objectives

33.48 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from the following:

(a) In the area of environment: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 481 (XXI) and 496 (XXII);

(b) In the area of human settlements: General Assembly resolution 37/221 on the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and General Assembly resolution 43/181 on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolution 485 (XXI).

33.49 The countries of the region have gone a long way in recognizing the close link between the capacity for development and for a better quality of life, on the one hand, and the capacity of the environment, on the other. This has led to efforts aimed at establishing an appropriate legal framework as well as specialized institutions. The incorporation of the environmental dimension is also reflected in national and regional development plans.

33.50 Notwithstanding the above, the countries require technical assistance in formulating environmental programmes and policies and in designing operational systems for environmental management; they also need support in acquiring experience in the management of specific instruments that would contribute to the achievement of environmental objectives.

33.51 The countries of the region in their efforts to promote harmonious economic and social development are constrained by the steady growth of their urban populations. In a situation of scarce resources, central Governments need to take advantage of the assistance which may be forthcoming from local governments and non-governmental community organizations in upgrading precarious settlements in the metropolitan centres. They also require analytical information for the planning and management of urban centres and systems of settlement.

33.52 At the same time, it is essential for them to have bases for establishing effective criteria for the selection of technology and the application of standards in the planning and design of housing. Moreover, they require a proper evaluation of both formal and informal construction activity, as well as of the latter's potential contribution to the creation of employment and to national development.

33.53 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) In the area of environment: to support the efforts of Governments aimed at creating the operational structures for achieving the environmental objectives set out in development plans and programmes; to contribute to the establishment and strengthening of the legislative instruments and institutional mechanisms for the protection of the environment at the national level; to assist in organizing training programmes aimed at strengthening the capacity to implement environmental policies and programmes; and to promote horizontal co-operation among the countries of the region in the struggle against desertification and the deterioration of land ecosystems, the marine environment and related ecosystems, and for the co-ordination of activities aimed at strengthening institutions and improving the management of the environment;

(b) In the area of human settlements: to support local governments in the operation, management and development of the urban centres of the region; to contribute to the achievement of patterns of spatial distribution of the population and of productive activities in harmony with the economic and social development strategies of the countries; to promote employment and the mobilization of savings in the housing and the construction sectors; and to increase and disseminate know-how and the application of technologies and norms that are suited to the realities of the region for the supply, improvement and maintenance of housing, infrastructure and services, particularly in precarious settlements.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.54 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under the subprogramme:

(a) In the area of environment: research and studies for dissemination among professional groups and concerned authorities and institutions on the formulation of environmental policies and the adaptation of the legal and institutional framework for the implementation of policies; development of specific instruments of environmental management such as land use management, environmental impact assessments, information and accounting systems for natural resources, inter alia, for the benefit of the various professional groups, public and academic institutions involved in environmental management; providing substantive support to Governments through technical assistance missions; organization of meetings, seminars and workshops to broaden knowledge, share experiences and promote contacts and co-operation among countries; and training activities aimed at strengthening institutions and disseminating information on the instruments of environmental management;

(b) In the area of human settlements: undertaking of studies and publications on conditions and trends of human settlements; publication of studies on the management, planning and maintenance of urban systems; undertaking studies and providing technical assistance on the selection and application of appropriate technologies and norms for improving living conditions and the standards of precarious settlements; providing technical assistance for the conduct of training programmes in local management; and consolidating the operation of training programmes and co-ordinating mechanisms established in previous years.

SUBPROGRAMME 8. POPULATION

(a) Objectives

33.55 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from resolution 346 (AC.68) of the tenth extraordinary session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Committee of the Whole and the "Regional population programme" (E/CEPAL/G.1002) of the fourteenth session of the Commission.

33.56 Considerable progress has been made in most of the countries in the areas of data collection and the preparation of basic demographic estimates, although, given the heterogeneity of the region, there are still some countries which require assistance in this regard. Progress has been much slower, however, as regards the clarification of the interrelationships between population dynamics and social, cultural and economic development, despite the fact that demographic change frequently both lessens the effectiveness of development policies and adds to the deterioration of the ecosystem. In spite of the consensus which exists concerning the need to incorporate population variables into development plans and policies, very few countries have established national population policies.

33.57 In order for sustained development to be achieved, a concerted effort will have to be made in many different spheres at the national and subnational levels. Many of the national institutions that use population information are not concerned with demographics as such, but instead are engaged in multidisciplinary activities encompassing a number of different fields. Thus, their population information

requirements range from those associated with work in the field of population proper and in related fields, such as family planning to those of activities in which such data play a secondary role, as is the case of planning in the fields of education, housing, investment banking and marketing. In addition, the availability of such information and the capability for utilizing it vary substantially from one country to another in the region and within the individual countries.

33.58 In recent years, the countries of the region have shown a marked tendency to decentralize administrative functions and, consequently, planning, which means that demographic activities will have to be adapted to the needs of subnational and local planning. This trend, in combination with the fact that population variables are increasingly being included in development policies, will create a large demand for the training of national officials at various administrative levels in respect of both general population issues and specific demographic subjects. By the same token, the multiplier effect of teaching activities will have to be increased and new training modalities will have to be explored in order to meet the countries' needs in this area.

33.59 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To provide assistance to Member States in compiling up-to-date information on population dynamics, their causes and consequences, and in analysing specific subpopulations for policy-making purposes;

(b) To assist the countries in incorporating population variables into public policies, in evaluating the impacts of alternative demographic trends on specific public programmes and vice versa, and in utilizing population/development models for planning purposes;

(c) To furnish assistance to the countries in the utilization of population variables in areas of special interest as regards development, including subnational and local planning, health issues, the status of women, the social and economic situation of the aged, family planning programmes and environmental impact analyses;

(d) To assist the countries in increasing their national institutions' capabilities for organizing, retrieving and utilizing population information within a multidisciplinary context, expedite the flow of information on population and facilitate access to the relevant technology;

(e) To train national personnel to conduct population studies and to incorporate demographic factors into development programmes and policies by means of short-term training on specific areas and applied long-term training, as well as increase the teaching of population studies within the region's universities and promote national training activities.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.60 Although efforts will continue at the national level to sensitize decision-makers and to provide planners with tools for incorporating population variables into development planning, special attention will be devoted to increasing the capabilities of sectoral ministries and regional and local authorities to generate, obtain and utilize the population inputs required for

their work, especially those relating to the basic needs of the most disadvantaged groups. Advisory services will be provided to the countries in order to help them obtain an up-to-date picture of their population dynamics, particularly those of the sectors most seriously affected by the crisis of the 1980s, and to utilize economic/demographic models for planning and policy-making, especially in the areas of health, education, housing, social security, employment and other social sectors. At the same time, priority will be given to specific subsectors, such as women, the aged and young people, and technical co-operation will be furnished in connection with the formulation, execution, follow-up and evaluation of plans and policies aimed at meeting the basic needs of these subgroups.

33.61 A wider range of users in various fields will be provided with greater access to population information and the utilization of such data will be facilitated at both the national and subnational levels. To those ends, technology will be developed and adapted for the creation and use of population and multidisciplinary data bases which will augment national information resources and capacities. In particular, assistance and training will be provided in the creation and utilization of multidisciplinary REDATAM-Plus 1990 data bases in the countries, in the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to the analysis of spatial population and related data, and in the development or adaptation of software which will facilitate the utilization of population information by secondary users.

33.62 Using the CELADE/DOCPAL data base, regional bibliographic information services will be furnished in order to decentralize data-retrieval operations, with the help of CD-ROM and other new technologies, to the country level. Within the framework of the IPALCA network, advisory assistance and training in these technologies will be given to national personnel, thereby facilitating the exchange of population information and making such data more accessible to a greater variety of users.

33.63 While postgraduate teaching activities will continue to be conducted, emphasis will be placed on short-term training tailored to the specific needs of target groups. In this connection, practical workshops will be organized at the regional level that will deal directly with sectoral development policies and plans in such fields as education, health, labour, housing and agriculture. Initially, the subprogramme will design and conduct those workshops; towards the end of the period, however, the responsibility for those activities will be transferred to the countries, which will carry them out in collaboration with professionals having postgraduate training in the field of population and development and with the advisory assistance of the subprogramme.

33.64 In order to increase the countries' self-reliance in the field of population, special attention will be devoted to the teaching of population studies in the universities at the undergraduate level in relevant disciplines and to postgraduate training in selected universities within the region. To this end, technical assistance and teaching materials will be provided in a wide range of development-related fields in which population variables are a factor.

SUBPROGRAMME 9. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

33.65 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 2542 (XXIV), 31/133, 31/136, 40/105 and 40/108 (Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women); and the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/46 and 1986/65; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 321 (XV), 328 (XV), 381 (XVII), 386 (XVIII), 388 (XVIII), 401 (XVIII), 457 (XX), 465 (XX), 481 (XXI) and 497 (XXII).

33.66 In most of the countries of the region, the pre-crisis strategy of gradually incorporating the new labour force into more productive work and into modern sectors no longer appears to be effective as a mechanism for increasing social justice and reducing poverty at a fast enough rate.

33.67 In the context of the medium-term economic projections for the region, there is urgent need to complement the traditional measures to stimulate job creation and improve social welfare services by adopting more ambitious and integrated policies, aimed at making a positive impact on the social structures themselves, and at reorienting the processes of social change that are under way towards a democratically determined goal of more desirable social systems. With respect to women, while some progress was achieved during the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, a number of obstacles still remain to the achievement of their equality with men and their effective integration into the process of development, as well as their full participation at all levels of decision-making.

33.68 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To assist the Governments of the region in formulating strategies, policies and new approaches for achieving the participation of the different social groups in the process of development;

(b) To make recommendations on alternative styles of development, taking into consideration the trends in the processes of social change against the background of situations of crisis and post-crisis;

(c) To provide technical assistance to Member States in establishing the institutional mechanisms to ensure the full collaboration and participation of women in the main aspects of economic, political and social development.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.69 The Secretariat will undertake the following activities under the subprogramme:

(a) Research aimed at formulating policies and publishing technical studies on alternative styles of development, processes of social change, participation of the various social groups in development, and on social policies in crisis and post-crisis situations;

(b) Organization of intergovernmental and expert meetings to promote the exchange of views and experiences on the above-mentioned issues;

(c) Interdisciplinary and multisectoral research on the role of women in the different aspects of development, which, within the context of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women - particularly in respect of the chapter on international and regional co-operation - will include specific recommendations for actions;

(d) The promotion of mechanisms to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable groups of women are satisfied in the context of the general approach outlined above;

(e) The provision of technical assistance in development planning and in the training of women in non-traditional areas. National, subregional and regional institutions working in the area of research and planning will receive special attention to enable them to strengthen their capacity, particularly to satisfy the needs of women belonging to a specific socio-economic group.

SUBPROGRAMME 10. STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

(a) Objectives

33.70 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 43/182, 43/194, 43/195 and 43/198; and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 476 (XXI), 477 (XXI), 478 (XXI), 481 (XXI), 486 (XXI), 491 (XXII), 497 (XXII), 498 (XXII) and 499 (XXII).

33.71 The countries of the region need to have access to a series of homogeneous and comparable statistics - and relevant data concerning countries outside the region - to help them make a correct assessment of the problems they share. However, the prevailing statistical systems in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are very heterogeneous in both the coverage and the processing and organization of their statistical data.

33.72 Despite the progress already made, there remains a great deal of room for making satisfactory use of the rapid advances in statistical methods and computational techniques developed in recent years. Although the use of computerized data banks has been expanding considerably, problems still exist concerning the timeliness and reliability of the figures. In addition, the gap between the potential offered by modern technology and its concrete use has widened in the region, which makes it difficult for most countries to have access to the quantitative information required for the formulation of their development policies.

33.73 Furthermore, the difficult situation in which the Latin American and Caribbean developing countries find themselves and the urgency with which the Governments need to resolve current and short-term problems do not usually allow them to give enough priority to prospective medium-term and long-term studies. Such studies have particular relevance in the context of the implementation of the forthcoming international development strategy at the regional level.

33.74 With regard to statistics and quantitative analysis, the objective of the subprogramme is to promote the improvement and harmonization of regional statistics through the adoption of international statistical classifications and the acceptance of the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

33.75 With regard to economic projections, the objective of the subprogramme is to help the countries of the region to define appropriate strategies for achieving sustained economic growth with equity.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.76 The achievement of the subprogramme's objectives in the area of statistics and quantitative analysis will be based on the following ongoing activities:

(a) Gathering, organizing, evaluating and disseminating, in an easily understandable and timely form, reliable and comparable statistics for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and for the region as a whole, concerning the following topical areas: national accounts, foreign trade and external financing, prices, industry, energy, agriculture, services, public and private sectors and social and demographic development. The statistics on external debt, industry, agriculture, mining, population, employment and income distribution will have been considerably expanded. Moreover, particular attention will be given to the Household Survey Data Bank, so that the main homogeneous variables will be available on line;

(b) Promotion of the transfer of those computational technologies that are most consistent with the technical and financial capacity of the countries;

(c) Wide dissemination of the recommendations and decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission. An attempt will be made to reach the greatest number of external users, providing them at the same time with an updated view of the available statistical methods and computational technology, so that by using the information for prospective studies and the formulation of policies they will help support government initiatives aimed at modernizing national statistical systems;

(d) Substantive support for the countries to make maximum use of the potential for co-operation in the field of statistical development.

33.77 In the field of economic projections, the Secretariat will undertake the following activities:

(a) Investigation and analysis of the socio-economic trends in the region by examining the national, subregional, regional and international studies emanating from the various bodies and forums; development of economic and social projections that will serve as a quantitative basis for the required prospective studies;

(b) Technical support to groups of Latin American representatives to international organizations, and continued representation of ECLAC in the Committee for Development Planning and the working teams on medium-term and long-term objectives of the United Nations Administrative Committee on Co-ordination;

(c) Provision of services as technical secretariat to the meetings of the ECLAC Committee of High-level Government Experts;

(d) Development of new methodological tools and reformulation of the analytical schemes on which the existing models are based, and dissemination of these through technical assistance missions or publication of technical documents to be distributed to the corresponding national bodies;

(e) Advisory assistance to Member States at their request in the formulation of national policies, plans, programmes and projections;

(f) Support to the substantive divisions and units of the Secretariat in periodic evaluations of the forthcoming international development strategy.

SUBPROGRAMME 11. TRANSPORT

(a) Objectives

33.78 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolution 356 (XVI) and the joint resolution of the executive heads of the regional commissions, adopted at their session held at Santiago, from 27 to 28 April 1989, and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1989/114.

33.79 In the past, Governments of the region have tended to meet the demands placed on their transport systems through investment in new infrastructure and in the rehabilitation of existing facilities. However, international trade has undergone profound changes that have had far-reaching effects on the structure of transport services. Moreover, changes in transport technologies are also occurring at an ever-increasing pace. These changes frequently favour vertical integration of services on a scale that - in the case of maritime and land transport - may be difficult to carry out without the co-operation of neighbouring countries.

33.80 At the strictly national level, a great number of countries will need to improve the efficiency of existing facilities in order to increase the capacity of urban transport services, problems which need to be dealt with through co-operation and the exchange of experience and technologies with other cities of the region. In addition, the experiences of other countries may be especially relevant when they incorporate technological solutions that can be adapted to conditions that are peculiar to the region.

33.81 Moreover, the crisis of the 1980s has made it apparent that the Governments of the region should reorient their focus in planning and managing the transport sector in order to emphasize improved organization and operation of the transport function from an overall systems point of view, and hence should adopt methodologies successfully used by the private sector to augment the productivity of transport enterprises.

33.82 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To support the countries of the region in their efforts to increase the overall efficiency of the infrastructure and productivity of their transport systems by improving their management and strengthening their institutional infrastructure;

(b) To foster legislation and policies that favour the introduction of new technologies and intermodal services, and to seek to apply innovative techniques in policy formation and planning;

(c) To provide support to the regional and subregional integration schemes, by identifying innovations and trends in transport markets, services, technologies and legal environments - including international agreements - aimed at facilitating intra-regional or subregional transport services;

(d) To promote co-operative efforts among the countries of the region in order for them to obtain the greatest possible benefits from such trends and innovations;

(e) To promote technical co-operation among cities in the region with a view to their applying socially acceptable methods for regulating urban transport demand, thereby minimizing the need for large investments in infrastructure.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.83 The Secretariat will carry out the following activities:

(a) Studies on trends relating to structural changes in transport services, both international and regional, which will be useful in making policy recommendations to Governments and public and private enterprises that provide services as part of the distribution chain;

(b) Technical assistance in those areas, with an emphasis on an approach that considers the overall efficiency of transport infrastructure and services for passengers and cargo in the context of the physical distribution chain at the national and international levels;

(c) Promotion of international agreements that will facilitate the provision of such services;

(d) Investigation and analysis of corridors of intermodal transport in the region, together with other mechanisms relating to transport, and of the opportunities they offer to promote regional integration;

(e) Support, through technical assistance missions, for the dissemination of measures to alleviate congestion in urban transport without increasing investment in infrastructure.

SUBPROGRAMME 12. SUBREGIONAL ACTIVITIES IN MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

(a) Objectives

33.84 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 42/1 and 43/210; Economic and Social Council resolution 2090 (LXIII); and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolutions 30 (IV), 386 (XVIII), 401 (XVIII), 404 (XVIII), 422 (XIX), 440 (XIX), 469 (XX), 470 (XX), 477 (XXI) and 486 (XXI).

33.85 During the 1980s the countries of the subregion have undergone a crisis which, although it has taken on different characteristics in Mexico than in the relatively smaller economies of Central America and Panama, has been of a length and severity unmatched by any other in the past 50 years.

33.86 In most of the Central American countries, production declined and per capita income fell to the levels recorded more than a decade earlier. Both public and private investments decreased sharply just when they were essential for the restructuring of the productive apparatus. The possibility of using external savings to finance growth was exhausted and the debt became one of the greatest obstacles to the economic progress of the subregion. Sharp fiscal imbalances

reduced the manoeuvring room of the Governments, and their ability to provide economic and social services declined accordingly.

33.87 Mexico, whose economy was battered by the debt crisis that erupted in 1982 and by the subsequent drop in oil prices (which have remained low), has been plagued with structural lags that continue to demand the attention of the Government. However, the Government is now meeting with success in its attempts to reverse the negative trends in inflation, the public deficit, non-petroleum exports and the external debt service which have been affecting the economy.

33.88 In some Central American countries, social and political tensions arose that led to armed confrontations. The serious economic and social consequences of those conflicts resulted in the displacement of a considerable segment of the population and sparked the flight of both skilled human resources and capital from the subregion. The number of poor people increased, income became further concentrated, and the countries fell farther behind in terms of social well-being, technology and productivity.

33.89 The situations described above, which have differed as a function of the specific circumstances in each of the countries, call for new development paths that will allow the countries to meet the challenges presented by the crisis and to adapt to new trends in the world economy. The goal is to achieve sustained and equitable growth based on a transformation of the countries' production structures that will permit them to draw upon their three sources of economic dynamism: the changing international economy, a more fully articulated domestic market, and subregional and regional integration.

33.90 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To support the countries within the area served by the ECLAC Subregional Office in Mexico in the formulation of policies and programmes designed to create macro-economic conditions that will be conducive to economic and social development by increasing capital formation and promoting the recovery of production capacity and to permit these countries to achieve a long-term structural adjustment without adversely affecting social conditions;

(b) To provide systematic annual analyses of the overall economic trends and the policies of the countries in the subregion on the basis of a consistent statistical and analytical framework;

(c) To supply periodic analyses of the Central American integration process and to propose possible means of overcoming the constraints that hold back its intensification;

(d) To furnish assistance in the design of social development plans and policies tailored to the individual countries' characteristics, which will help to improve the quality of life of the population by means of, *inter alia*, an increase in the volume of production and the productivity of the poor, especially in rural areas; the integration of women into the development process; and greater participation by the population in the formulation of social and economic development plans;

(e) To assist Member States of the subregion to formulate economic and social policy measures and strategies in respect of agricultural and industrial sectors which, taking the specific features of the individual countries into consideration, will promote the development of traditional and non-traditional agricultural export activities and the restoration of industrial productivity;

(f) To promote co-operation among the countries of the subregion in areas related to economic and social development, as well as in connection with the search for new sources of energy and the development of energy resources in general and the electricity sector in particular;

(g) To foster technical co-operation between the countries of the subregion and the rest of the region in regard to economic and social matters of mutual interest.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.91 The following activities will be carried out by the Secretariat under the subprogramme:

(a) Research and the publication of studies on macro-economic policies and strategies in respect of priority sectors or activities in selected countries;

(b) The compilation of information and the publication of annual studies on economic trends in the countries of the subregion and an analysis of the evolution of the Central American integration process. The development of timely indicators and the preparation of an annual report on the economic outlook for the Mexican economy. Periodic monitoring of the trends and perspectives of the agricultural, manufacturing and energy sectors;

(c) The preparation of studies on the process of transforming the productive apparatus in a manner that promotes social equity, including, *inter alia*, studies on possibilities for expanding both traditional and new agricultural and agro-industrial exports; policies aimed at raising the production, productivity and income of small-scale producers; and the development of the manufacturing sector with a view to augmenting its external competitiveness and identifying specific means of promoting it;

(d) The analysis of the demand and supply of energy from various sources (hydrocarbons, wood, hydroelectricity) and co-operation with the countries in the formulation of energy-generation programmes and studies aimed at strengthening the integration of electricity and hydrocarbons systems;

(e) The preparation of studies with a view to the intensification of Central American integration in specific areas of trade, financing and the adoption of technologies; these studies will include analyses of specific integration mechanisms relating to technology, investment and trade between Central America and the other countries of the region;

(f) The design of national social strategies for dealing with the problem of poverty. Work will continue on the analysis of migratory movements and the utilization of external remittances, as well as on the formulation of proposals for integrating the initiatives taken independently by poor groups on the basis of these groups' own forms of organization.

SUBPROGRAMME 13. SUBREGIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CARIBBEAN

(a) Objectives

33.92 The legislative authority for the present subprogramme derives from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean resolution 358 (XVI) and various resolutions adopted by the the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC).

33.93 Owing to structural factors and to the consequences of the economic crisis stemming from the heavy burden borne by the countries in respect of the servicing of their external debt, the countries of the subregion require assistance in the formulation of policies aimed at diversifying their economies and raising their productivity, as well as at making them more adaptable to rapid technological change while, at the same time, improving their population's quality of life. They also need to strengthen their economic and social information systems so that they may fill the gaps which exist in this respect and will be able to derive greater benefit from the activities of the United Nations system. In addition, they require technical support as they seek solutions to the environmental problems of the subregion and need assistance in promoting greater participation by women in the development process. They also require advisory services in connection with the creation of institutional modalities and mechanisms, which will permit them to establish co-operative links with other developing countries both within and outside the subregion.

33.94 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To provide advisory assistance to the Governments of the subregion in connection with the implementation of development activities in areas recommended by the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee;

(b) To furnish support to the countries of the subregion for the formulation of policies and programmes designed to achieve long-term structural adjustment without causing social conditions to deteriorate;

(c) To promote co-operation among the Caribbean countries in spheres relating to economic and social development and to natural resources and the environment;

(d) To foster technical co-operation between the Caribbean countries and the rest of the region in respect of economic and social issues of mutual interest;

(e) To assist Member States in the subregion in formulating policies aimed at promoting: (i) social development and the integration of women into the development process; (ii) an optimum utilization of the resources available for the economic and social development of those countries; (iii) the incorporation of population variables into the design of social and economic development plans; and (iv) the incorporation of environmental aspects into the development process of the region;

(f) To facilitate the access of the countries of the subregion to existing economic and social development data bases and to promote their use.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

33.95 The following activities will be carried out by the Secretariat under the subprogramme:

(a) Research and publication of studies on social and economic problems of the subregion, including the formulation of policies concerning the integration of women into development;

(b) Establishment of institutional ties and mechanisms, in conjunction with the Governments and international bodies, for the creation or reinforcement of co-operation networks relating to various development activities at the national and subregional levels, including environmental protection;

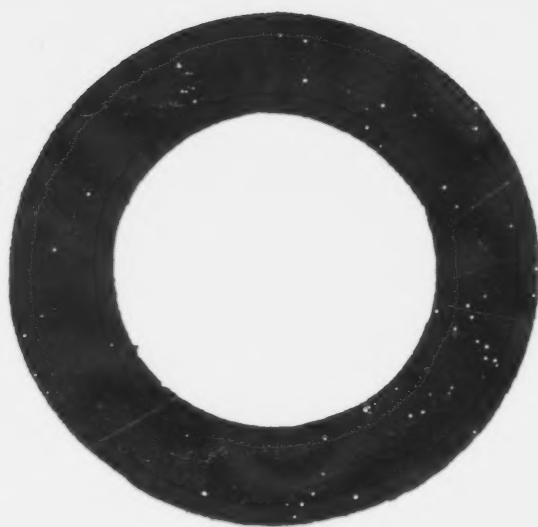
(c) Publication of policy papers concerning the restructuring of the subregion's economies and the social consequences thereof;

(d) Promotion of increased economic co-operation among the member countries of the CDCC and between them and the rest of the region;

(e) Publication and dissemination of bibliographic and statistical material concerning economic and social development;

(f) Provision of technical assistance, including advisory services and training, upon request in areas within the framework of the subprogramme's objectives;

(g) Promotion of technical co-operation among the developing countries of the subregion.





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PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997*

MAJOR PROGRAMME VI. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Programme 34. Regional co-operation for development in western Asia

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PROGRAMME 34. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN ASIA

A. Programme

1. General orientation

34.1 The general mandate for the programme emanates from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973 and 1985/69 of 26 July 1985, which established and amended the terms of reference of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

34.2 The overall goal of the Commission is to initiate and facilitate concerted action for the economic reconstruction and development of the region, to raise the level of economic activity in Western Asia and to maintain and strengthen the economic relations of the countries of that area both among themselves and with other countries of the world. This includes emphasis on an integrated approach to development by dealing with the social aspects of development and the interrelationship of economic and social factors.

34.3 The general objectives of the programme are the following:

(a) To promote economic and social development through the promotion of regional and subregional co-operation and integration;

(b) To promote self-reliance in the region through the fostering of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries;

(c) To serve as the main general economic and social development centre within the United Nations system for the ESCWA region;

(d) To exercise team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation with regard to the relevant economic and social activities of the United Nations system within the ESCWA region;

(e) To act as a "think tank" contributing to the enrichment of development literature in view of the distinctive position of ESCWA in that domain among the various regional and national organizations in the Arab region;

(f) To formulate and promote development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and to act as an executing agency for relevant operational projects.

34.4 The sharp decline in oil prices has led to a decline in the financial resources available for development in the ESCWA region. Recession in Gulf Co-operation Council countries has resulted in a decline in the flow of capital to the rest of the region and a reduction in workers' remittances as well as return-migration of workers from labour-importing to labour-exporting countries in the region. Development in the region was influenced by unfavourable global economic developments, coupled with military conflicts and political instability, which continue to hamper development and growth. The armed conflict between Iran and Iraq went on for about eight years until a cease-fire took effect in August 1988. The military conflict in Lebanon remains a destabilizing factor. The struggle of the Palestinian people for their human rights and self-determination

has still not been resolved. The situation continues to divert resources - both human and material - away from economic and social development. This is reflected in the size of defence budgets which strain the limited resources of many ESCWA countries and contributes to the rapid deterioration of the external debt position of some member countries. The social consequences of these conflicts have been enormous and are reflected in deteriorating standards of living, lower incomes, high disability rates, the displacement of segments of populations, the destruction of property, and the problems of social adjustment to changes in traditional norms and codes.

34.5 The economies of most member countries continue to be characterized by an unbalanced economic structure. In the case of the oil-producing countries, this is reflected in the dominance of the oil sector; hence, energy stands to be a major issue that ESCWA continues to address. In the more diversified economies, the commodity-producing sectors have languished over the years in comparison with a growing services sector. In this connection, no real growth in the manufacturing sector has taken place. The share of local output in meeting total demand for manufactured goods has, in fact, been decreasing over the last decade. Similarly, food security in the region is vulnerable owing to a weak agricultural sector. To a large measure, this is due to water scarcity. Given the aridity of the region, conservation and rational use of water becomes an issue of extreme importance. Yet many other factors contribute to this problem: degradation of the natural resource base, inadequate physical and social infrastructures, low technological levels, and the largely unfavourable socio-economic environment under which agricultural production is undertaken.

34.6 The economies of the countries of the region are also characterized by a high degree of dependence on the world economy. The region is, therefore, extremely sensitive to interaction with the world economy. In this connection, the small size of the domestic market of individual ESCWA countries renders industrialization highly dependent on export-oriented strategies. This, in turn, implies the need for more dynamic trade relations among the ESCWA countries themselves and between the ESCWA countries and developing countries in other regions. Development of both the industrial and agricultural sectors are closely linked with international trade through their dependence on the outside world for virtually all machinery and equipment and a large component of intermediate products. The interdependence between agricultural development and external trade is also evident in the region's critical dependence on food imports, the dominance of agricultural raw materials in the export trade of the non-oil economies of the region, and the fact that trade provides an outlet for agricultural surplus produce.

34.7 The possible medium-term and long-term impact on the region of two important international economic developments needs to be stressed. The first is the rapid advances in the field of technology, particularly advanced technology, including micro-electronics, biotechnology and the development of new materials. The second relates to the increasing trend towards the application by the industrialized countries of protectionist policies toward developing countries, including those of the ESCWA region. In this connection, the impact on ESCWA countries of the measures envisaged by member countries of the European Economic Community for further consolidation of their markets and their economic policies in 1992 will be studied.

34.8 In the field of science and technology, the main problem continues to lie in the weakness of the scientific and technological base, particularly in terms of research and development, technology transfer and high-level manpower.

34.9 Environmental concerns will play an increasing role in the efforts of the region for sustainable development. Issues such as desertification, industrial waste management, surface and ground-water pollution, urban environmental considerations, human ecology, global warming and climatic change will have to be addressed. The ESCWA work programme will be reviewed comprehensively with a view to identifying environmental problems that require attention and initiating activities in areas related thereto.

34.10 Efforts to further regional economic co-operation and integration are currently increasing, at least at the subregional level, with the creation of two subregional groupings, namely the Gulf Co-operation Council and the Arab Co-operation Council. Greater efforts are, however, needed to promote regional co-operation in view of the future challenges facing the region.

34.11 In the light of the above, and in addition to the problems already mentioned, some of the key issues and problems to be addressed during the medium-term plan period will include employment, urbanization, population dynamics, rural poverty, housing, particularly low-cost housing, social welfare, particularly with regard to the handicapped, the changing role of the family, women in society, and the new social structure. Other key issues and problems with which the region must come to grips and which are, in varying degrees, directly and indirectly linked with ongoing developments and changes in the oil sector, are the following: the return-migration of workers; external indebtedness and the balance-of-payments deficit in a number of the countries concerned; and the uneven distribution of income.

34.12 The overall responsibility for the elaboration and implementation of this programme is entrusted to the secretariat of ESCWA.

2. Overall strategy

34.13 In accordance with the terms of reference of relevant legislation and with its objectives, ESCWA is a multidisciplinary body working for the achievement of the greatest possible degree of co-ordination among the plans and programmes of its member States in the various fields of economic and social development and for the development of regional co-operation among the States of the region. Most of the activities under this programme will be of a regional or subregional character.

34.14 In order to meet the objectives of the programme, the Secretariat will carry out the following functions:

(a) Provide substantive secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;

(b) Give assistance to the Economic and Social Council, at its request, in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic and social problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;

(c) Undertake and sponsor research, studies, surveys, plans of action and technical studies on socio-economic problems and development of the ESCWA region;

(d) Establish and develop a statistical data base, which involves collecting, evaluating and disseminating economic, social, technological and statistical information, as appropriate;

(e) Convene expert group meetings, ad hoc intergovernmental meetings, seminars and training workshops and conferences;

(f) Provide technical assistance and regional advisory services, upon request, to member States of the region;

(g) Contribute to the planning, organization and execution of technical co-operation and assistance programmes;

(h) Co-ordinate and co-operate with other units and bodies of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, in particular, the League of Arab States and its specialized agencies, the Gulf Co-operation Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

34.15 In the context of co-ordination and co-operation with United Nations organizations, the ESCWA secretariat maintains close relations with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through its joint Agriculture Division. New working arrangements are being developed with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in order to continue and strengthen co-operation in activities relating to industry, computer application and manpower and the disabled, respectively.

34.16 Closer co-operation is also envisaged with global secretariat programmes, namely: the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development, with a view to avoiding duplication, ensuring complementarity and exchange of information. At the same time, efforts will continue to further co-ordination through joint programming of activities with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

34.17 In the implementation of its population and women in development subprogrammes, ESCWA will maintain and strengthen its existing co-operation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women for support in the field of research, seminars, training studies and other forms of technical assistance.

34.18 ESCWA carries out a number of multidisciplinary projects with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in support of the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific, industrial entrepreneurship, engineering infrastructure, micro-electronics and informatics, energy and human resource development. Such co-operation will continue and efforts will be made to identify further areas of priority to the region and to seek UNDP support, either through direct funding or cost-sharing.

3. Subprogramme structure and priorities

34.19 ESCWA will continue to deal with issues covered in the current plan, all of which are oriented towards the attainment of the main objective of the Commission, namely, regional co-operation for development. Within this overall objective, the subprogrammes have been reoriented to address continuing issues as well as new ones arising in the light of recent global and regional developments.

34.20 The proposed subprogramme structure is as follows:

- Subprogramme 1. Food and agriculture
- Subprogramme 2. Development issues and policies
- Subprogramme 3. Environment
- Subprogramme 4. Human settlements
- Subprogramme 5. Industrial development
- Subprogramme 6. International trade and development finance
- Subprogramme 7. Natural resources
- Subprogramme 8. Energy issues
- Subprogramme 9. Population
- Subprogramme 10. Public administration and finance
- Subprogramme 11. Science and technology
- Subprogramme 12. Social development and welfare
- Subprogramme 13. Women and development
- Subprogramme 14. Statistics
- Subprogramme 15. Transport and communications

34.21 Subprogrammes 1, 2, 6, 7 and 12 are designated as high priority.

B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

(a) Objectives

34.22 The legislative authority for subprogramme 1 emanates from General Assembly resolutions 32/172, paragraphs 6 and 7; 33/90, paragraphs 2-6; 34/110, paragraphs 4, 8 and 14; 43/191, paragraphs 4, 8 and 12 and 44/236, annex, paragraphs 5 and 8; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1980/58, paragraphs 3, 5, 10 and 16; and 1987/40, paragraph 5; Commission resolution 71 (VI), paragraph 5; UNEP Governing Council resolutions 8/17, paragraph 5; and 15/23, paragraphs 2 and 4.

34.23 Agricultural productivity has been increasing at low rates in most of the ESCWA countries, and has even been declining in some, bringing about an increasingly acute shortfall in domestic food supplies in a situation where demand is growing, thus increasing the dependence on external sources of supply. Stepped-up migration from the countryside has also exacerbated the problems of urban unemployment and has increased pressure on limited food supplies and on

services in urban centres. In some countries, the situation is made even worse by the fact that agricultural exports are the major source of the foreign exchange needed to purchase production inputs and capital goods and to pay for mounting debt-servicing.

34.24 The countries of the region mostly act individually without co-operation or co-ordination in any of the fields so essential for agricultural development, despite the difficulty of achieving success through action at the country level alone.

34.25 Economic incentives to agricultural producers in the region are generally inadequate. Major constraints on production include deficient price incentive schemes and weak and inadequate infrastructure. Agricultural research, agricultural extension, marketing, farm credit, and farm input distribution are basic weaknesses in the agricultural system.

34.26 The main constraint to agricultural investment in the region is not so much inadequate resources as the limited absorptive capacity. This takes the form of a shortage of well-prepared investment projects that combines with inadequate administrative, management and infrastructure capacity for the formulation and execution of projects.

34.27 One of the major bottle-necks to increasing agricultural production in the region is the deficiency of trained personnel, particularly in the field of agricultural planning, project analysis and evaluation. No less important is the training of personnel entrusted with the execution of agricultural development projects. The capacity to absorb the flow of investment funds depends to a great extent on the above-mentioned two types of training.

34.28 The ESCWA countries are also prone to desertification owing to their aridity, fragile ecological conditions and over-grazing. Scarcity of water limits agricultural, pastoral and forest production. The problem is compounded by the fact that it is also a region where ecological damage is extremely difficult to restore or reverse. It is estimated that 98 per cent of the land area of the region is subject to one process of desertification or another, with varying degrees of severity.

34.29 Despite the agrarian reform programmes undertaken in some of the ESCWA countries, agriculture is still dominated by small and fragmented holdings, and the problems of marginal and landless farmers are still serious in many of them. Moreover, there is a wide gap between urban and rural areas in the availability of basic services.

34.30 A central problem of the agriculture sector in the ESCWA region is that of low productivity, the result of which is that the agricultural growth rate has not been able to match the population growth rate and the sector still has to emerge into an era of self-perpetuating growth and expanding technology. Yet, sustaining population growth by feeding more people is not enough. The problem for agriculture in the region is how to contribute to broadening freedom of choice beyond the barest necessities of life.

34.31 The principal objectives of this subprogramme are: to assist the member countries in promoting agricultural and rural development by identifying major problems and obstacles and by outlining appropriate solutions to promote awareness

of the importance of regional developments and issues of agricultural development and resource use, and to impart knowledge on methods and techniques for the efficient planning and management of agricultural development and the rational exploitation of the resource potential and, in this regard, to stimulate economic and technical co-operation among ESCWA countries at the subregional and regional levels; to promote integrated activities to strengthen national capacities in agricultural policy analysis, agricultural planning, project analysis resource conservation, farm management and agricultural marketing and, in this context, to support the institution of an integrated system for the co-ordination of agricultural planning in the region by 1995, taking into consideration the existing subregional co-operation councils; to promote the formulation and implementation of comprehensive food sector plans or strategies, taking into account nutrition policies, investment requirements, links between food production and food consumption systems and the instability of farm output; and to promote an integrated approach to agrarian reform and rural development based on growth with equity and local participation.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.32 The secretariat will assist member States in their efforts to improve and co-ordinate their sustainable agricultural and rural development policies and plans through research, training, meetings and technical assistance. An integrated system for the co-ordination of agricultural planning in the region, taking into consideration the existing subregional co-operation councils, will be promoted by 1995.

34.33 Training in the fields of policy analysis, planning, project analysis, resource conservation, agricultural credit, marketing and farm management will be continued through the organization of workshops, and an integrated framework for the establishment of a regional training network in agricultural project analysis will be formulated by 1995.

34.34 Given the importance of the agriculture sector for the region, a regional analysis of food and agriculture performance, policies and strategies will be undertaken.

34.35 The secretariat will continue its activities in the monitoring and management of arid and semi-arid ecosystems, and a national plan of action to combat desertification and a specific desertification control project will be formulated during each biennium of the medium-term plan period.

34.36 Activities for improving cropping practices are to be directed towards promoting the use of appropriate technology at the small-farmer level. Special emphasis will be given to the promotion of small-farm development through a multidisciplinary farm management approach.

34.37 Studies will be carried out on an in-depth analysis of the agricultural sector and the level, structure and characteristics of rural poverty, with a view to developing a policy and programming framework for food and agricultural production, income-generation for the rural poor, the alleviation of rural poverty and the reduction of malnutrition. The concept and procedures of local-level planning will be introduced with a view to improving local participation in decision-making and in more effective management of resources.

34.38 High priority will be accorded to activities that strengthen the technical and institutional capacity essential for agricultural and rural development. Special attention will be given to the strengthening of institutions for the extension services, delivery of inputs, credit and marketing. Especial emphasis will be placed on the development of institutional structures that permit effective responses to local conditions and problems, including prudent management of resources and environmental capacities and the rehabilitation of the environment previously subjected to degradation and misuse.

34.39 Private sector initiatives will be encouraged to develop intensive agriculture. These could be in the area of agro-processing, including by-product utilization and export and domestic marketing. Where appropriate, the private sector will be encouraged to shoulder the major task of providing the services and supplies to the farms.

34.40 Direct assistance to the regional associations for agricultural credit and agricultural food marketing, the regional centre on agrarian reform and rural development and the land and rural development programme of Al-Quds Open University will be provided on a continuing basis during the medium-term plan period.

SUBPROGRAMME 2. DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND POLICIES

(a) Objectives

34.41 The legislative authority for subprogramme 2 derives from General Assembly resolutions 43/182, paragraphs 3 and 4; 43/186, paragraphs 3 and 4; 44/169, section III, paragraph a (ii) of the annex; 44/179, paragraphs 5 and 6; 44/236 paragraphs 5 and 8 of the annex; and Commission resolutions 93 (VIII), paragraphs 1 and 2; 114 (IX), paragraphs 1, 2 and 3; 118 (X), paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5; 1001 (VIII), paragraphs 1, 2 and 3; 173 (XV); and 176 (XV).

34.42 The sharp drop in oil prices and revenues has led to a recession in economic activities in the countries of the region. The problems faced by these countries are the increasing balance-of-payments deficit, a reduction in financial resources available for development and growing debt and debt servicing. This clearly demonstrates the danger of economic dependence of some countries of the region on the exportation of a single commodity, namely, oil, which has continued to dominate economic activities. To cope with these problems, member countries have adopted structural adjustment policies designed to sustain economic development with emphasis given to the promotion of subregional and regional economic co-operation and integration. The two least developed countries of the ESCWA region (Democratic Yemen and Yemen) are dependent on external financial resources to finance development projects and to finance their large trade deficits. For instance, more than 60 per cent of domestic investment comes from external sources while on average, exports cover only about 3 per cent of imports. Economic recession in the Gulf region has led to a reduction in the external resources available to these countries. Special attention will therefore be paid in the upcoming phase to the promotion of domestic financial resources and to the promotion of areas of co-operation between the two countries. Efforts to cope with the problems faced by countries of the region have been hampered by a lack of systematic economic analysis and of data.

34.43 In view of their continued relevance, most of the objectives of the subprogramme during the forthcoming medium-term plan period are the same as those of the current plan. They will focus on the following issues:

(a) Contributing to the harmonization and co-ordination of strategies, policies and programmes of member countries in the economic and social development fields towards attaining subregional and regional economic integration;

(b) Assisting the two least developed countries in identifying their development needs, promoting their self reliance on domestic financial resources and the efficient allocation of these resources;

(c) Disseminating information on the economic and social developments in the region;

(d) Stimulating the private sector to play a more prominent role in the implementation of development projects of the two least developed countries.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.44 The secretariat will undertake the following activities under this subprogramme:

(a) Harmonization and co-ordination of plans, programmes and policies of member countries of the region. Since these activities are intersectoral, they will be undertaken jointly with the concerned divisions in ESCWA. Efforts will be made to co-operate with national and regional organizations in order to explore the possibility of the joint undertaking of studies aimed at achieving these objectives;

(b) Identification of areas of economic co-operation and co-ordination between the two least developed countries in the region. Studies related to the problems of those countries will be implemented in close co-operation with the concerned divisions of ESCWA;

(c) Improvement and expansion of the annual survey of economic and social developments in the ESCWA region by concentrating on issues relating to the promotion of regional economic co-operation, together with the improvement of the data base of the survey. More in-depth studies on development issues in the region will be undertaken through closer co-operation between the Commission and specialized research centres in countries of the region;

(d) Attention will be given to sustainable development.

34.45 The objectives will be met by undertaking research technical studies and reports, organizing intergovernmental and expert group meetings through closer co-operation with other regional and international organizations and through advisory services in various fields of economic development.

SUBPROGRAMME 3. ENVIRONMENT

(a) Objectives

34.46 The legislative authority for subprogramme 3 derives from General Assembly resolutions 42/53; 42/186, annex; 42/187, paragraphs 8 and 16; 44/226, section I, paragraphs 1 to 3 and section III, paragraphs 1 to 4; 44/227; 44/228, section I, paragraphs 12, 15 and section II, paragraph 13; 44/229, paragraphs 4, 8, 9, and 24; and 44/236, paragraphs 5 and 8 of the annex; Commission resolution 81 (VII), paragraphs 2 to 5; and the report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, paragraph 36; and recommendations 22, 26, 45, and 53.

34.47 The main environmental problems in the ESCWA region that severely constrain sustainable development and conservation of natural resources are:

(a) Land degradation, which includes changes in soil properties, soil fertility loss, waterlogging and salinization, desertification and inadequacy of water supply;

(b) Industrial pollution, which involves water and air pollution and toxic waste dumping in rivers, lakes and coastal marine shores; and related environmental disruption caused by energy-related activities;

(c) Urbanization problems associated with rapid socio-economic development, and its negative effects on the rural environment, hygiene and nutrition.

34.48 The environment in the ESCWA region has been simultaneously affected by the pollution of large urban and rural centres and by the negative effect of population growth, depletion of natural resources and deficiency of basic services.

34.49 In the light of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, it is necessary to focus on a regional approach to sustainable development, particularly with regard to the management of natural resources. The integration of environment and resource-management policies should be based on the identification of complementary objectives and the use of policy actions that are compatible, efficient and cost-effective. Water being a key element in the socio-economic development of the ESCWA region, the evaluation of specific pollutants in the management of water resources, assessment of the available technologies for, and the cost of potable water purification, municipal and industrial waste water treatment are issues of paramount importance where member countries will soon face a number of policy questions that require co-operative and joint action. Hence, the formulation of macro-economic policies must take into account, from their conceptual stage, the net impact of such policies on environmental quality and the natural resources base of the country. Likewise, the reduction of air pollution, the recovery and reuse of residues from industrial waste, conscious energy consumption and production and promotion of non-polluting renewable energy technologies, require further co-operation for the improvement of the regional environment.

34.50 The objectives of subprogramme 3 are:

(a) Elaboration of effective means of preventing, minimizing or solving common problems related to environmental management, taking into account the objectives of sustainable development;

(b) Harmonization of environmental policies among member countries in response to regional and global environmental priority issues;

(c) Assessment of major environmental concerns of the region with a view to building up an information base for environmental and natural resources management policies;

(d) Identification and implementation of regional projects related to environmental questions.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.51 The secretariat will concentrate its efforts on promoting regional and subregional initiatives to make sustainable development the guiding principle in the interrelated objectives of economic growth, environmental protection and sound development within the ESCWA region.

34.52 Increased attention would be given to the analysis of problems that may arise from the expected climatic change due to projected sea level and temperature changes. Options for facing the negative consequences of these changes would be prepared for consideration by member countries. Efforts would be intensified to provide decision makers, managers, scientists and the public at large with information on the environmental problems of the ESCWA region, as joint efforts are crucial to safeguard the quality of environment in the region. Particular importance will be attached to the dissemination of the results of the Commission's activities on a biennial basis, including project implementation in the area of environment, through conferences, seminars, consultancy services, training and publications.

34.53 Internal collaboration will be maintained with other substantive divisions to promote work on environment and sustainable development wherever relevant within the Commission's mainstream activities through undertaking specific conceptual studies, research activities, and joint activities with countries, organizations and other bodies, including such activities as training and advisory co-operation programmes comprising a number of well-defined projects.

SUBPROGRAMME 4. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

(a) Objectives

34.54 The legislative authority for subprogramme 4 derives from General Assembly resolutions 32/162, sections V, VII and VIII; 42/191, paragraph 6 and section II; 42/187, paragraphs 8 and 15; 42/184, paragraphs 14 and 15; and 44/236, paragraphs 5 and 8 of the annex.

34.55 The problems addressed by the subprogramme relate to:

(a) Settlement polarization caused by inappropriate approaches to planning and monitoring practice;

(b) Institutional overlapping and waste of resources generated by existing settlements management procedures;

(c) Lack of integration between planning objectives and the needs of the population from the perspective of attaining sustainable development.

34.56 The following are the objectives of the subprogramme:

(a) Monitoring human settlements development in the region through the review and appraisal of planning and implementation policies and promoting the development and adoption of suitable planning and implementation approaches;

(b) Assisting Governments of the region in formulating concrete proposals for balanced human settlements development through improved co-ordination and management vis-à-vis planning and execution;

(c) Formulating and promoting articulated legislative and administrative frameworks, as well as the inclusion of measures to adapt spatial planning to the needs of special groups of population, such as women, the youth, the disabled and the elderly;

(d) Proposing ways and means for the inclusion of the specific social, cultural, economic and environmental characteristics of the urban areas of the region in the planning process in the context of a sustainable development strategy based on environmentally sound human settlements practices.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.57 The secretariat will continue to collect data on human settlements indicators in order to monitor changes and trends in the existing human settlements situation. Revisions of the data bank will be made in order to refine its coverage and to adapt it to the changing situation in the region.

34.58 Studies will be undertaken to assess the situation and make recommendations on the availability and utilization of resources for human settlements development with special emphasis on manpower training, energy-efficient building materials and effective use of financial resources. Planning and policy-making will be assessed with a view to promoting a balanced human settlements development. The institutional framework for this development will also be examined with particular reference to management, co-ordination and monitoring procedures. The two major aspects to be covered will be the formulation and promotion of polarization reversal policies and technical assistance to Governments of the region for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. Attention will also be given to the inclusion of environmental issues in plans and strategies to achieve a sustainable human settlements development.

34.59 Further studies on urban development will be undertaken in order to promote urban plans that take into account the needs of the different groups that constitute the urban population, including youth, the disabled, women and the elderly, as well as the transformation of the spatial, social and cultural patterns of the city. Special attention will be given to the relationship between urban land use and the spatial distribution of urban activities, such as work, residence and leisure and to the effect of rapid urban growth in that distribution. Efforts will be made to promote the inclusion of the Islamic architectural and city planning heritage in urban development planning. The need for sound city management procedures will continue to be emphasized, with special reference to urban environmental management, provision and maintenance of public services, establishment and improvement of information systems, and appropriate legislation.

34.60 Further, subprogramme 4 will contribute to the multisectoral work to be carried out in collaboration with other social subprogrammes. These activities will be related to: (a) the family (subprogramme 13); (b) human resources development (subprogramme 9); and (c) living standards and poverty line (subprogramme 12).

SUBPROGRAMME 5. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

34.61 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 40/169, paragraph 5; 41/182; 42/184, paragraph 15; 42/186, paragraph 11; 42/192; 43/178, paragraphs 5 and 16; and 43/186, paragraph 1; and Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/74, paragraph 2,

34.62 Industry in the ESCWA region is characterized by a narrow range of products manufactured and a low level of specialization. Complementarity in production remains limited, while little has been done to improve efficiency, which is a prerequisite of an integrated industrial structure. The approach to industrialization has so far been a piecemeal one, with little or no co-ordination among the countries of the region. The industrial infrastructure remains inadequate in terms of entrepreneurship, skills and research and development.

34.63 The objective of the subprogramme is to assist Governments of the region in their efforts to promote industrial production and productivity, to upgrade industrial institutions and their services and further to improve industrial development policies and mechanisms of co-ordination and co-operation in this area. More specifically the objectives include:

(a) The harmonization of sectoral, national and regional industrial plans, with special emphasis on enhanced industrial diversification, structural adjustment, private sector and small-industry development;

(b) The development of human resources for industry, including the development of management and technical skills, the creation of industrial entrepreneurship and the increase of the participation of women in industrial development;

(c) Industrial rehabilitation and assistance to selected branches of industry, war-torn areas and underdeveloped regions;

(d) The development of technological capabilities, advanced technologies and their applications;

(e) The identification of perspectives for improved environmental protection, waste management and pollution control.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.64 The activities of the secretariat under subprogramme 5 will concentrate on the following:

(a) In the area of industrial development policies and regional co-operation, the secretariat will conduct detailed comparative studies on the impact of industrial development incentives. Furthermore, it will seek to formulate a coherent strategy for long-term developments in the industrial sector and the integration of environmental considerations in industrial operations. Progress in industrial development will be continuously monitored and assessed and due priority will be given to the special circumstances and needs prevailing in the less and least developed countries of the region and the occupied Palestinian territories;

(b) A plan of action for the promotion of a co-ordinated approach to training and placement of trainees within the region will be developed. Studies and reports on selected aspects of industrial skill development will be produced. Training seminars in the region in such subjects as project formulation and evaluation and industrial administration and management will be organized;

(c) Possibilities for improving the institutions and industrial study service in the region will be examined. The secretariat will implement regional projects aimed at enhancing the development of training concepts and curricula, especially in the fields of entrepreneurship development and management skills. Furthermore, the secretariat will participate in the implementation of research and development projects to generate greater awareness for possibilities of increasing the participation of women in industrial development;

(d) Activities regarding the promotion of advanced industrial technologies will continue throughout the medium-term plan period. In each biennium, work will focus on new selected industries. Promotional activities will cover micro-electronics, informatics, biotechnology, genetic engineering and new materials. Studies will be carried out to identify viable regional projects based on the application of advanced technologies. Strengthening the intraregional and international technology transfer networks and mechanisms will be a particular priority issue during the second and the third bienniums of the medium-term plan;

(e) Work on industrial pollution control and waste management will continue with the identification and assessment of main problem areas. Starting in 1992, research findings will be used to formulate sectoral, national and subregional project proposals. The secretariat will promote South-South and technical co-operation among developing countries/economic co-operation among developing countries co-operation arrangements to enhance the dissemination of information and know-how and the interregional transfer of experience in resource-saving technologies, the identification of projects and the preparation of project profiles;

(f) The main continuing activities under the subprogramme are the assistance to existing industries and the compilation, analysis and evaluation of relevant technical, financial and marketing information for the identification, pre-feasibility testing and promotion of new industrial investment opportunities.

SUBPROGRAMME 6. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

(a) Objectives

34.65 The legislative authority for subprogramme 6 derives from General Assembly resolutions 35/56, annex, paragraphs 19, 20, 22, 29, 40, 52, 67, 72, 134 and 135; 38/200, paragraphs 2(c) and 5; 39/216, paragraphs 1 and 5; 39/218, paragraph 1; 40/207, paragraphs 2 and 3; 41/165, paragraph 3; 41/167; 41/171, annex, paragraphs 12, 13, 27 and 29; 41/182, paragraph 1(a) and (b); and 41/202, paragraph 1(b), (d) and (e); 44/444, paragraph 7 of the annex; and 44/169, section (III), paragraph a(ii) of the annex; and Commission resolution 157 (XIV), paragraphs 2 and 3(a).

34.66 The main problems that are addressed by the subprogramme are the following:

(a) The trade of ESCWA countries remains highly concentrated in terms of commodity composition (exports of oil, cotton and phosphates) and geographical distribution (in favour of developed countries). Intraregional trade is still modest in relative terms and below potential and expectations;

(b) The protectionist policies applied by major trading partners to imports of manufactures and agricultural products adversely affect those exports in which the region have a comparative advantage - new items, such as petrochemicals and fertilizers, and traditional ones such as textiles, clothing and footwear;

(c) The collapse of oil prices, associated with rising import prices, has tended to reduce earnings and the purchasing power of exports and has caused unfavourable movements in the terms of trade;

(d) The pursuit of overall import-substitution policies has reduced the incentive to export, rendered competition a rather marginal concern and dampened the search for new markets, while at the same time it has promoted an increased reliance on non-competitive trade channels, such as trade agreements and barter deals. As a result, insufficient attention has been paid to the important determinants of exports, such as financing, qualified manpower, exchange rate policies, trade régimes and product quality and costs;

(e) Trade in the region is handicapped by the lack of information on potential export outlets and alternative sources of imports, as well as inefficient and excessive formalities and procedures and weaknesses in the trade data of countries of Western Asia;

(f) As in the case of the trade in merchandise, intraregional trade in non-factor services still appears to be modest, while the possibility and potential of co-operation have barely been explored;

34.67 The objective of the subprogramme is to assist member countries to expand and diversify their trade in goods (particularly manufactures and semi-manufactures) and services, to reduce their external dependence, to contribute to a better understanding of the issues involved in expanding and diversifying the trade of member States and to formulate policies and measures at the national, regional and global levels in an effort to bring about faster trade expansion and more balanced trade structures. More specifically, the objectives include: the identification of obstacles to intraregional trade, trade with other developing

regions and with developed-market economies and measures to promote this trade, including trade financing by 1993; the identification of the ways and means of strengthening the role of the private sector in the promotion of trade and regional co-operation by 1995 and of strengthening the trade data base and improving trade facilitation by 1997.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.68 The secretariat will pursue the objectives of the subprogramme mainly through research (technical studies and reports), the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings and the initiation of operational activities that will emphasize a major issue in each biennium in the light of global and regional developments and guidance from member States. Special attention and priority will be given to the promotion of intraregional trade in goods and services and identification of the obstacles that face specific categories, together with the promotion of trade with developing countries.

34.69 During the medium-term plan period, the secretariat will focus on the following activities:

(a) Identification of opportunities and modalities for the promotion of intraregional trade in goods and services, review of economic structures, competitiveness and complementarity and the impact of the Gulf Co-operation Council and the Arab Co-operation Council in this respect;

(b) Identification of opportunities and modalities for the promotion of trade and economic co-operation with other developing countries;

(c) Analysis of the trends, problems and prospects of exports of manufactured goods from the region, taking into consideration the characteristics and requirements of the markets of developed countries, other developing countries and the regional market;

(d) Identification of the impediments to trade expansion and diversification which are inherent in domestic trade promotion policies and an analysis of their effectiveness, as well as the identification of institutional support needs with particular reference to trade financing;

(e) Identification of the ways and means of strengthening the role played by the private sector in promoting export and import trade and enhancing regional co-operation;

(f) Identification of ways and means of strengthening trade information and improving the efficiency of trade facilitation measures.

SUBPROGRAMME 7. NATURAL RESOURCES

(a) Objectives

34.70 The legislative authority of subprogramme 7 derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/167, paragraphs 2, 3 and 6; 1987/7; 1985/49; 1985/52, paragraph 1; 1987/9; 1987/10, paragraph 4; and 1983/54; and Commission resolution 165 (XV), paragraph 2.

34.71 The problems addressed in the subprogramme are as follows:

(a) Lack of thorough, quantitative and qualitative assessment of the available and potential water resources in the region which is a prerequisite for optimum utilization and efficient allocation of these resources;

(b) Absence of adequate water planning and policies that would bring about the development and conservation of available water resources;

(c) Inadequate water security in the region, owing to insufficient rational development, management, utilization and conservation of water resources at the regional, subregional and national levels;

(d) Inadequate basic hydrological, hydrogeological and hydrometeorological data at national and regional levels owing to their scantiness and wide distribution in space and time;

(e) Manpower availability and adequacy in the water sectors are still critical for all skilled and expert levels in the ESCWA region;

(f) Lack of regional co-operation and co-ordination of mining activities;

(g) Difficulty encountered by most of the non-oil-producing countries in obtaining sophisticated technology on exploration and exploitation of mineral resources coupled with an absence of technical capabilities and a shortage of skilled and well-trained manpower;

(h) A shortage of financial resources, which continues to befall vital mineral projects in some countries of the region, especially the two least developed countries of the region.

34.72 The objectives of subprogramme 7 are as follows:

In the water resources sector:

(a) To increase awareness of the interrelationship between the phenomenon of water scarcity on the one hand, and population, urbanization and the process of sustainable development on the other;

(b) To assist in the enhancement of water quality and the improvement of water resources;

(c) To promote regional and subregional co-operation in order to ensure water security in the region by establishing principles for the optimum utilization of available water resources, particularly in the case of shared water basins;

(d) To enhance awareness and knowledge on ground-water pollution and its causes, namely, leaking septic tanks, waste and toxic chemical dumps and run-off from fertilized fields.

In the mineral resources sector:

(a) To contribute to the assessment of mineral resources and the development of their exploration and management;

(b) To concentrate on the introduction of new and appropriate techniques in the assessment, development and planning of mineral resources in the region;

(c) To promote regional and subregional co-operation in the development of mineral resources, with emphasis on sea-bed mineral resources and non-metallic minerals;

(d) To facilitate the establishment of a regional data bank for mineral resources;

(e) To promote effective management in the development of mineral resources and strengthen manpower training activities in the region.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.73 The means of action envisaged by the secretariat under this subprogramme are as follows:

In the water resources sector:

(a) Collecting, processing and disseminating hydrological and hydrogeological data;

(b) Conducting studies on hydrological-hydrogeological networks distribution and parameters pertaining to water budget evaluation;

(c) Conducting studies on water resources development, conservation and management and water resources technologies;

(d) Organizing training programmes, technical meetings and seminars at the subregional and regional levels, in particular, on issues of low cost and appropriate technologies and non-conventional water resources techniques;

(e) Mobilizing financial resources for water resources development in the region;

(f) Promoting the development of adequate water resources to meet the challenging and growing demand for agricultural and domestic water supply;

(g) Developing human resources and institutional set-ups for efficient water resources management.

In the mineral resources sector:

(a) Collecting, processing and disseminating data and information on mineral resources, throughout the period of the medium-term plan;

(b) Conducting studies on mineral resources availability and management, including recent technologies for mineral exploration and prospecting;

(c) Formulating training programmes and contributing to their implementation;

(d) Organizing meetings and seminars for the improvement of indigenous technical capabilities in the mineral sector.

SUBPROGRAMME 8. ENERGY ISSUES

(a) Objectives

34.74 The legislative authority of subprogramme 8 derives from General Assembly resolutions 38/151; 39/176, paragraph 8, 39/173; 40/208; 41/170; 41/212; and 43/193; and the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy, paragraphs 52(b), 1(c).

34.75 Given that the demand for energy in the ESCWA region has been rising and has been forecast to increase significantly over the next few decades, it has become essential that comprehensive energy plans on both the demand and supply sides (conventional and renewable), be drawn up to ensure that energy requirements are met in the most effective way.

34.76 The lack of adequate energy data continues to be among the chief obstacles to the preparation and implementation of country energy plans. The energy balances drawn up by a number of ESCWA countries are not sufficiently accurate or comprehensive to serve as a basis for a reliable assessment of their energy situations. The methods used in preparing energy balances in most countries of the region also lack the data that would permit the monitoring of operations carried out between initial production and final consumption.

34.77 The excessive use of depletable energy resources and the lack of appropriate policies and measures for more efficient use of energy, which still result in substantial waste in several sectors, require that the whole question of energy consumption be analysed and ways found to raise the level of efficiency in energy consumption.

34.78 Activities undertaken in the ESCWA region for the development of renewable sources of energy are largely limited to research and pilot projects. Other than in a few restricted cases, such activities have not extended to the applicational aspects of the development of new and renewable sources of energy, especially as regards the energy needs of local communities under various climatic and social conditions.

34.79 With regard to the use of non-conventional energy, particularly nuclear energy, activities in the region have so far been confined to selected research in limited fields by a small number of countries. Therefore, there is a need for a close regional co-operation through the contribution to the implementation of joint nuclear energy projects for various peaceful purposes.

34.80 Until recently, little attention has been given to the adverse environmental effects of the extensive use of fossil fuels. Environmentally, sound management of energy resources is to be thoroughly considered in planning the activities under this subprogramme for the development of these resources in the region.

34.81 The objectives of the subprogramme include:

(a) Promotion of a reliable energy data bank to be used, inter alia, for monitoring the various energy-related activities in the region and disseminating relevant information among ESCWA countries;

(b) Contribution to the linking of activities for the development of renewable sources of energy to the practical uses of relevant technologies, particularly in rural and remote areas;

(c) Contribution to the co-operation for improvement of the functioning of the existing regional organizations and the establishment of new ones;

(d) Ensuring that energy policies take into consideration the environmental implications of energy use in the different economic sectors.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.82 The means of action envisaged by the secretariat under subprogramme 8 are as follows:

(a) Collection, computerization and analysis of energy data and information and their dissemination, including forecasting and projections of energy requirements;

(b) Technical publications on the various energy-related activities, including surveys and assessments of these activities;

(c) Technical publications and reports on appropriate energy planning techniques and methodologies including organization of seminars and meetings for exchanging information and expertise in this field;

(d) Formulating training programmes in the field of energy planning, at the regional and interregional levels and participating in the organization of training courses to promote the efficient use of energy and to develop energy resource management methods, in co-operation with international and regional organizations concerned with energy issues;

(e) Conducting and disseminating studies on the impact of changing oil markets on energy policies;

(f) Conducting and disseminating studies on natural gas and liquified petroleum gas development and their marketing prospects;

(g) Organizing technical meetings at subregional and regional levels for co-ordination of activities and exchange of information and experiences on various issues of energy resources development;

(h) Preparing and disseminating studies on the energy needs of rural and remote areas and on modalities for meeting those needs through the development of decentralized renewable energy systems;

(i) Establishing regular contacts with national, regional and international organizations for the co-ordination of energy-related activities and promoting close co-operation for the development of energy resources and their efficient use.

SUBPROGRAMME 9. POPULATION

(a) Objectives

34.83 The legislative authority for subprogramme 9 derives from General Assembly resolution 44/213; Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/81, paragraphs 4 and 7; Commission resolution 128 (XI), paragraph 1; and Review and Appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, annex; Recommendations for the further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action (ST/ESA/SER.A/99), 1986, paragraphs 4-10, 14, 15 and 18-35.

34.84 Although data collection activities in the ESCWA region are relatively well advanced now, the demographic analysis and research on the determinants and consequences of population trends are still weak. The population data collected in the region are not only inadequately analysed but they are also not utilized for sound policy formulation. Another problem is the lack of reference material that greatly facilitates research or lack of access to such material, if available.

34.85 The objectives of the subprogramme are as follows:

(a) To assist Governments of the region in developing durable capabilities for demographic data analysis and to monitor population trends;

(b) To assist Governments in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies; and in the integration of population variables into development plans and programmes;

(c) To promote the development of human resources; to assess continuously the developments in the labour market; to strengthen the statistical and planning capabilities of the labour ministries; and to co-ordinate labour movements between Arab labour sending and labour-receiving countries.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.86 In the field of demographic data collection and analysis, the secretariat will produce, on a regular basis, a number of demographic and related socio-economic indicators necessary for development planning and policy-making; and will analyse, on a regular basis, the demographic situation in the region.

34.87 In the field of population and development policies, the secretariat will undertake studies on the determinants and consequences of fertility, mortality and migration. The monitoring of national population policies will continue. Special emphasis will be given to action-oriented research on the integration of population processes in sustained socio-economic development and establishing a sustainable relationship between human resources and other resources.

34.88 In the field of human resources development, the secretariat will undertake training on available computer software and elaboration of a regional model for manpower planning will take place during the three bienniums of the medium-term plan. Imbalances between labour market requirements and educational outputs will be tackled towards the end of the period of the medium-term plan 1992-1997.

34.89 In the field of monitoring labour market developments, the secretariat will carry out technical studies describing the employment situation and developments in the labour market at the sectoral and global levels will be prepared during the first and last bienniums. A fully computerized labour force data base, comprising statistical data from censuses, surveys and current statistics, will be operational and it will be continuously updated during the period of the medium-term plan.

34.90 In the field of strengthening the statistical and planning capabilities of labour ministries, the secretariat will assist the countries of the region in the establishment of a labour force and employment information unit within their respective labour ministries towards the end of the forthcoming medium-term plan.

34.91 In addition to maintaining a population reference centre, the secretariat will continue to publish its biannual Population Bulletin of ESCWA, including various research results dealing with Arab population questions and the proceedings of the meetings organized by the Commission. Population data will be disseminated through computerized media. More training workshops will be organized and related training material will be published.

SUBPROGRAMME 10. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

(a) Objectives

34.92 The legislative authority for subprogramme 10 derives from General Assembly resolutions 35/56, annex, paragraphs 20, 23, 31 and 96; 42/198, paragraphs 17 and 18; 43/198, paragraphs 11 and 12; and 44/205, paragraphs 5, 11, 12 and 13; and Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/92, paragraph 3; and 1988/74.

34.93 With the end of the era of "high" oil revenue services of ESCWA oil-exporting countries and the spillovers from these countries to ESCWA non-oil-exporting countries, and the subsequent drop of available financial resources in both groups of countries, a need is felt for promoting more efficient mobilization, management and allocation of financial and economic resources and for designing realistic policies of development planning and management.

34.94 Some countries of the ESCWA region are facing serious external debt problems. Although these countries have been able to reschedule their debts, they are facing difficulties in generating the financial resources needed to service the debts, thus shifting the problems to the 1990s.

34.95 The Gulf Co-operation Council has initiated many steps to advance financial, monetary and economic co-operation among its members. The recently established Arab Co-operation Council is also aspiring to strengthen similar areas of co-operation among its members. These developments have a far-reaching impact on the economies of the region. Examination and analysis of the developments and the obstacles confronted is of major importance.

34.96 The establishment of a well-functioning Government aiming at achieving satisfactory results in public administration and finance at the multisectoral as well as the regional level within the country is still hindered by many obstacles, most important among which are the human element and the institutional infrastructure.

34.97 The objective of the subprogramme is to examine and assess national and regional efforts in resource mobilization, management and allocation. More specifically, the objective is to seek means to address such issues as external debt, adjustment policies and privatization, and to examine and assess monetary and financial co-operation among the members of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.98 The activities of the secretariat under subprogramme 10 are largely based on research and publication of reports or studies. Technical assistance will be provided upon request by member countries. The issues to be covered during the three bienniums of the medium-term plan are:

(a) The monitoring of fiscal and monetary developments and trends in the ESCWA region;

(b) Finance and development planning and management in selected ESCWA countries;

(c) Financial, monetary and economic co-operation in the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council;

(d) Investment incentives in selected ESCWA countries;

(e) Management of financial institutions in the ESCWA region;

(f) External debt and financial and economic management in selected ESCWA countries;

(g) Multisectoral public administration in selected ESCWA countries;

(h) Management and organization of Government in selected ESCWA countries.

SUBPROGRAMME 11. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(a) Objectives

34.99 The legislative authority of subprogramme 11 derives from General Assembly resolutions 34/218, 41/65, 41/160, 42/180, 42/192, 43/56, 43/184, 43/443 and 44/14, section B, paragraphs 1 to 4.

34.100 The ESCWA region is facing a crucial need for the endogenization of its science and technology activities. Most of the issues and problems addressed in the Vienna Conference on Science and Technology for Development a decade ago remain valid. In addition, the region now faces the challenges of new technologies and their implications.

34.101 The need to support research and development and encourage technological innovation in basic and new technologies is now well recognized in the region. There is, however, still great ambiguity with regard to policy measures and mechanisms needed for this purpose. Therefore, the undertaking of activities that address the problems of innovation, research and development and their linkages with the production system, and the commercialization of research and development activities is envisaged.

34.102 One of the main features of the ESCWA region is that it consists of a number of small countries in which the scale of scientific and technological activities is limited in scope and coverage. Technological co-operation is, therefore, necessary to maximize the benefits of scientific and technological resources.

34.103 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To assist member States in identifying the requirements for formulating science and technology policies and plans within environmentally sound and sustainable development; in developing local technological capabilities for participating in all aspects of technology policies, such as negotiating, selecting, transferring, adopting and developing technology; in formulating guidelines and measures to deal with reverse transfer of technology; and in analysing and assessing the implication of new advances in technologies on their development effort;

(b) To continue the formulation of measures and mechanisms to make the process of technology transfer more effective in particular the transfer of pollution-control technologies, which could promote a better management of environmental problems;

(c) To continue the promotion of regional co-operation among the member States, particularly in the utilization of new technologies.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.104 The secretariat will pursue the following activities under the subprogramme:

(a) Continuing to conduct in-depth studies and organizing seminars and expert group meetings to formulate appropriate technology policy recommendations;

(b) Organizing training courses for high and middle ranking officials and personnel in the private sectors to develop technological capabilities in various aspects of technology policy, technology institutions, transfer and development of technology;

(c) Promoting co-operation between ESCWA member States by formulating project proposals for co-operation in science and technology. Concrete cases will be identified with specific mechanisms to support the co-operation process;

(d) Mobilizing resources and support for the implementation of co-operation projects in the application of new technologies;

(e) Conducting studies and organizing expert group meetings in co-operation with other concerned United Nations organizations to assess the implication of new technological developments for the region;

(f) Continuing to disseminate information and distributing publications on technology to fill the existing knowledge gap in the region regarding science and technology.

(a) Objectives

34.105 The legislative authority for subprogramme 12 derives from General Assembly resolutions 42/49, paragraphs 1 to 5; 43/93, paragraphs 5, 6, 8 to 10, and 15; 43/98, paragraphs 5, 6 and 9; 43/99, paragraphs 5 to 8; 43/121, paragraphs 5 and 6; 44/55; 44/56, paragraphs 8 and 12; 44/57, paragraph 3; 44/58, paragraph 2; 44/59, paragraphs 1, 4, and 8; 44/65, paragraphs 3 and 14(c); 44/66; 44/67, paragraph 12; 44/70, paragraphs 7, 9 and 13; 44/72; 44/141, paragraphs 1 to 3(d); 44/142; and 44/236, paragraphs 5 and 8 of the annex; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/40, paragraph 5; 1988/46, paragraphs 4 and 5; and 1988/47, paragraphs 2 to 4; and Commission resolution 157 (XIV), paragraphs 2 and 3.

34.106 All the countries of the ESCWA region have established social protection schemes and programmes in favour of special social groups, but these schemes and programmes vary greatly from one country to another and they have never been subjected to any critical comparative review. Thus, reasons for success and failure in the field have never been assessed. Moreover, owing to administrative and technical obstacles, the tendency to separate the social and economic dimensions in development projects often results in duplication of efforts and wastage of resources. Therefore, ESCWA member States need qualitative and quantitative social data on the dimensions of alternative developmental approaches in order to formulate sound policies and programmes on social development.

34.107 The objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To undertake overall analysis of the impact of development trends in furthering greater participation of the entire population in the development process;

(b) To assist, through the promotion of an integrated approach to social development and welfare and the strengthening of governmental machinery and intergovernmental co-operation, in the formulation and promotion of policies and strategies aimed at the following: improving the monitoring of social and human resources development; facilitating the integration of less advantaged groups, such as the disabled, the young, the elderly and the rural population in the development process; establishing comprehensive national social welfare systems; and ensuring equitable access thereto by the entire population;

(c) To analyse the impact of social development on the environmental situation, and of the degradation of environment on living conditions;

(d) To review the implementation of strategies recommended in the field of the control and prevention of crime and drug abuse and in the field of social security and social protection systems;

(e) To promote the integration of the social dimension in rural development.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.108 The social situation in the region will be monitored by the secretariat through regular updating of social indicators and regular surveying of the social situation, taking into consideration global and regional socio-economic

developments. Furthermore, assistance will also be given to Governments, upon request, to improve social planning and social monitoring methodologies through the collection and processing of social data and information.

34.109 The secretariat will undertake studies and provide support to regional ad hoc expert groups with a view to examining issues related to developmental social security policies and programmes with particular reference to social security and social protection systems (1994-1997); programmes and policies dealing with prevention and control of crime and drug abuse will also be examined with a view to formulating more operationally oriented and effective policies and innovative measures.

34.110 Through an intersectoral approach to rural development, the social dimensions of rural development will be examined with a view to formulating appropriate policies and programmes for rural areas which will contribute, inter alia, to the reduction of poverty and the promotion of further integration of the rural population into the development process. In this context, emphasis will be placed on the role of rural institutions, in particular, co-operatives. Furthermore, as a contribution to the intersectoral social strategy of promoting the role of the Arab family in development, assessments of the changing conditions of the family and its further integration into the development process will be undertaken.

34.111 Follow-up will continue on strategies and measures adopted at the national level in respect of the less advantaged groups, such as the very poor in both rural and urban areas, the disabled, the young and the elderly, and attention will be given to ensuring effective access of these groups to adequate social welfare services and their participation in the development process. Directories and manuals will be updated and other forms of assistance will be provided, particularly in the area of transferring technology to the disabled.

SUBPROGRAMME 13. WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

34.112 The legislative authority for subprogramme 13 derives from General Assembly resolutions 40/105, paragraphs 2 and 4; 40/108, paragraph 10; 41/111, paragraph 2; 42/178, paragraphs 3 and 8; 44/76, paragraph 3; and 44/77, paragraphs 3, 5, 9, 12, 18 and 19; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/18, paragraph 4; and 1987/122; Commission resolution 66 (V); ESCWA Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in Western Asia (1975-1985); Regional Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women (1980-1985); Strategy for the Development of Arab Women in Western Asia to the Year 2000 (1984); the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985).

34.113 The major problems that are addressed in the subprogramme, and which the medium-term plan 1992-1997 is designed to alleviate, consist of the following:

(a) The conflict that is very often experienced between women's public and familial roles and the lack of a comprehensive solution to the problem;

(b) The difficulties that women face in having access to the resources and the acquisition of skills that will allow them to achieve their immediate and long-term goals and that will increase their participation in the labour force in order to contribute to the social and economic development of themselves as individuals and citizens, to their families, their communities and their nations.

34.114 While the integration of women in development remains the main focus of the subprogramme, special emphasis is being placed on formulating a strategy and identifying activities within its framework that would be more in harmony with the cultural setting of the region. More specifically, the objectives of subprogramme 13 are:

(a) To continue to provide information on the situation of women and the Arab family in the region through situational analysis based on the continuous updating of data on women resources available for technical assistance services through the continuous updating of the Directory of Professional Arab Women;

(b) To identify acceptable approaches to the economic participation of Arab women that take into consideration women's familial responsibilities and economic contributions;

(c) To continue to assess the changing responsibilities of the Arab family and to identify the institutions that would be necessary to provide alternative services and to give support to the functions undertaken by the family;

(d) To formulate and promote legislations and administrative set-ups that are in congruence with the changing role of the Arab family and that would provide legal context for the different alternative modalities available to women;

(e) To emphasize the special role of women in the protection of the environment;

(f) To provide decision makers with recommendations for adopting innovative alternatives for women within the Arab social and cultural context.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.115 The development of human resources will continue to be the focus of the secretariat's activities under the subprogramme. Three major areas of activities will be undertaken. The first will continue to be the collection and dissemination of data on women through the data sheets and the Directory of Arab Professional Women and the publication of the results of different studies in ESCWA Series on Arab Women in Development. The second area of activities will continue to examine the changing role of the Arab family and will assess the institutions that provide services that are supportive and/or a replacement of family services. Studies in this area will be undertaken. The third area of activities will deal with the identification of alternatives that are available to Arab women within the social context of the region. These would include: increasing the participation of women in occupations in which they already participate in big numbers, since demand by far outstrips supply; accelerating the introduction of women's employment in occupations in which only little headway has been achieved in this respect; and increasing the economic participation of Arab women in the ESCWA region through a culturally acceptable approach which takes into account women's familial responsibilities and economic contribution. These tasks would also entail the

identification of existing requirements that aim at adapting work methods to the needs of women, assessing their adaptability to the ESCWA region, and, based on the above, proposing policies on appropriate modalities and the necessary prerequisites for their successful adaptation and adoption. In essence, under this subprogramme the secretariat will be implementing the Strategy of Arab Women in Western Asia: A Third Choice, which was formulated during the past medium-term plan.

34.116 Feasibility studies will be undertaken which would be followed by pilot activities demonstrating innovative alternatives that can be adopted by the region. These pilot activities would be within the scope of technical assistance activities provided regionally or nationally to test the viability of some of the modalities.

SUBPROGRAMME 14. STATISTICS

(a) Objectives

34.117 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolution 42/5, paragraphs 5, 6 and 7; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1985/7, paragraph 1; 1985/8; and 1988/59, paragraphs 1 and 3; Commission resolution 13 (XI); and Commission resolution 155 (XIV).

34.118 The shortage of trained personnel in statistics and data processing has had a serious effect on the development of statistical services in most ESCWA countries. Training should address the evolving needs of statistics and data processing in the region and compensate for the loss of trained staff from governmental statistical offices to the private sector and other governmental departments.

34.119 The use of computers for statistical purposes is expected to expand at a rapid pace in the next decade. The introduction of new information technologies, such as statistical networks, the development of data base management systems and the increasing use of statistical packages will have a far-reaching effect on the work and structure of central statistical offices.

34.120 A major problem in some of the countries of the region is the lack of in-depth analysis of the data, especially survey data, collected by the statistical offices. Another problem experienced by some ESCWA countries is the absence of co-ordination between the producers and users of statistics.

34.121 The problem of standardization touches upon a wide range of subjects in statistics. Continuous efforts are needed at the national and regional levels to increase the comparability of data produced by ESCWA member States.

34.122 The objective of the subprogramme is to contribute to the development of timely and relevant statistics in the ESCWA region in co-operation with national, regional and international bodies concerned. More specifically, the objectives include:

(a) The collection, compilation and dissemination of comparable statistics on national accounts, prices, finance, industry, energy, external trade and other economic areas;

(b) The development, collection, standardization and dissemination of environment and social statistics, including the situation of women and other special population groups;

(c) The development of sources of population statistics, including population and housing censuses, civil registration system and demographic surveys;

(d) The promotion of unified international concepts, definitions and classifications, especially those related to national accounts, international trade, industry, migration, environment and employment;

(e) Assistance in the development of the census and survey capabilities of ESCWA member States and in the collection and analysis of economic and social data obtained from household surveys and censuses;

(f) The improvement of statistics in terms of reliability, timeliness and comparability and application of advanced means of collecting, processing and disseminating economic and social statistics in the ESCWA region.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.123 The following activities will be undertaken under the subprogramme:

(a) Statistical training in national accounts and on specific subjects related to economic statistics in co-operation with regional institutes and organizations;

(b) Collection and dissemination of basic statistics in the economic and social areas of the ESCWA region through recurrent general or specialized publications;

(c) Setting up and maintenance of statistical data bases concerning various statistical areas for use by the ESCWA secretariat and member States, as well as by international and regional organizations;

(d) Organization of technical meetings on specific topics, in co-operation with the United Nations Statistical Office and regional organizations;

(e) Provision of support to technical assistance activities, in national accounts, population statistics, data processing and household surveys in ESCWA member States;

(f) Publication and dissemination of methodological statistical manuals in Arabic.

34.124 The above-mentioned activities are of a continuing nature, especially in the field of collection and dissemination of statistics. However, some issues, such as the application of the revised System of National Accounts and international economic classifications will receive special emphasis in the first half of the medium-term plan.

SUBPROGRAMME 15. TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Objectives

34.125 The legislative authority for subprogramme 15 derives from General Assembly resolution 39/227, paragraph 2; Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/78, paragraph 4; and Commission resolutions 92 (VIII), paragraph 3; 138 (XII), paragraph 3; 143 (XIII), paragraph 4; 170 (XV), paragraph 3.

34.126 Lack of co-ordination and planning in matters relating to transport and communications among the countries of the ESCWA region and between neighbouring countries in particular, give rise to misallocation of financial resources and impede the smooth flow of passengers and goods and the ease of movement and travel of individuals across the countries of the region, all of which constitute problem areas that need to be addressed.

34.127 With regard to the land-based network of the transport infrastructure and, more specifically, to road and railway networks, the problems of completing the missing links that will connect neighbouring Arab countries in the region and improving and maintaining existing links are of vital importance.

34.128 Trade in the ESCWA region is predominantly seaborne and, as a direct consequence, the competitiveness of exports from Arab countries in foreign markets depend largely on the cost of the carriage of such goods by sea. Therefore, increased attention should be paid to maritime transport and, in particular, to the development of national merchant fleets in order to increase the share of national carriers in the external trade of Arab countries, particularly in solid or liquid bulk commodities.

34.129 Human resources in the transport sector suffer from the scarcity of trained national personnel specialized in matters relating to this sector, which range from planning to operations and management, particularly at the middle and higher levels of management. Manpower development and training problems are issues that need to be addressed.

34.130 With regard to the communications sector, the ESCWA region has not completed the introduction of communications technologies to develop interregional links that will ensure the region's integration at the global level. Consequently, part of the telecommunications traffic between ESCWA member countries is still routed via transit centres outside the region, thereby failing to take advantage of the available facilities in the ESCWA region.

34.131 The objective of this subprogramme is to establish connected transport and communications networks that will ensure a reliable and continuous flow of traffic among ESCWA member countries and with other regions, through integrated ESCWA regional transport policies and operations. More specifically, the objectives are the following:

(a) To assist member countries in planning the development of transport and communications facilities and in formulating integrated transport policies, including regional transport networks and multimodal operations, as well as the training of transport personnel;

(b) To improve regional land, maritime and air transport infrastructure, where needed, together with operations, with particular emphasis on maintenance;

(c) To facilitate interregional and intraregional traffic and communications by harmonizing transport rules and regulations;

(d) To improve the interregional telephone infrastructure and operations;

(e) To implement the programmes of action of the Transport and Communications Decade for Western Asia.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.132 The activities of the secretariat in the area of transport will concentrate on the following:

(a) Work will be initiated on the establishment of a mechanism of co-ordination for transport and communications development plans and policies at the ESCWA regional level and on a draft ESCWA (Arab) transport convention, as well as the establishment of an ESCWA regional transport training institute. Emphasis will be placed on manpower training, comparative analysis of transport development plans in ESCWA member countries, as well as on the maintenance of the existing transport infrastructure. These actions will be carried out through surveys and studies, by convening ad hoc expert group and intergovernmental meetings, and by conducting training courses and advisory missions;

(b) Surveys and studies on the formulation of a master plan for the establishment of ESCWA regional transport networks, as well as the consolidation of transport bridges through specific projects between the Mashreq and the Maghreb countries, will be initiated with a view to having the master plan completed;

(c) The identification, formulation and preparation of regional and subregional programmes and projects for ESCWA regional merchant fleets and ports development will be carried out and finalized;

(d) The implementation, finalization and follow-up of the programmes and projects for the Transport and Communications Decade for Western Asia, including the full establishment of the Trans-Arab Corridors will be conducted. Research and technical assistance activities, as well as support for negotiations (pledging conferences, inter-agency meetings, etc.) for the Decade's investment programmes will be undertaken.

34.133 The activities of the secretariat in the area of communications (telecommunications and postal services) will focus on the preparation of plans and programmes to link the ESCWA region with the other [world] regions. These activities and, in particular, the improvement of telephone-switching centres, will be tackled within the framework of the Transport and Communications Decade for Western Asia.

34.134 The secretariat will continue to publish annually data on the transport and communications sector (networks, capacity and utilization).
